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AN
APOLOGY
FOR
CONFIRMING
TO THE
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
CONTAINED IN
A SERIES OF LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO THE
RIGHT REV. BENJAMIN T. ONDERDONK, D. D.
BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW-YORK.

17
1743
BY THOMAS S. BRITTAN.

Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you
a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."

ST. PETER.

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TO
THE RIGHT REVEREND
BENJAMIN T. ONDERDONK, D. D.
BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW-YORK,
THIS VOLUME,
CONSISTING OF LETTERS, FIRST ADDRESSED TO HIM,
IS NOW, BY HIS PERMISSION,
DEDICATED,
WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF ESTEEM AND RESPECT,
BY HIS OBLIGED,
OBEDIENT,
HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.



INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

THE great English moralist, as he has been entitled, (Dr. Johnson,) lays down, in one of his essays, the following moral axioms:—"That as all error is meanness, it is incumbent on every man who consults his own dignity, to retract it as soon as he discovers it, without fearing any censure so much as that of his own mind. As justice requires that all injuries should be repaired, it is the duty of him who has seduced others by bad practices or false notions, to endeavour that such as have adopted his errors, should know his retraction; and that those who have learned vice by his example, should by his example also be taught amendment."

These sentiments perfectly accord with the dictates of holy writ, which require genuine penitents to "*bring forth fruits meet for repentance.*" They seem to have been the principles by which the greatest exemplars of piety have always been influenced, when, after their wanderings, they were restored to their right minds. And especially were they illustrated by the conduct of the

great apostle of the Gentiles, who, after his conversion to the faith, manifested such zeal as to call forth the admiring testimony of his fellow Christians. "*He which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed!*"

Repentance then, is not only a generous, but a magnanimous grace; it is a temper inferior only to innocency itself. Indeed it requires greater courage to acknowledge an error once indulged in, than altogether to have avoided it. It is virtue so placed, as sometimes to yield more glory to God than even unoffending excellency could have done—it aims at repairing the dishonours done to the divine will—it pays a voluntary homage to the obedience of the wise and the good—it acknowledges the malignity and evil of transgression, and incites, in spite of every obstacle and every difficulty which the pride of our own hearts, or the misconduct of others, might present, to make an open and artless confession of our folly, and to aim at reclaiming those who may still be wandering.

Under the influence of these views, I sit down to make a voluntary renunciation of the errors into which I have fallen, and to do homage to the sacred cause of TRUTH. Conscious that after such an avowal, I have yet sufficient dignity remaining to support my character; and feeling anxious that others may be warned against the mistaken notions by which I have been deceived, I would imitate the very best and wisest of men, in frankly and ingenuously acknowledging that I

have been misguided ; and that the deception has regarded a subject of vital importance, being no less than the mode of government authoritatively enjoined upon “ the holy Catholic Church,” the kingdom upon earth of our blessed Redeemer.

It was my lot to have been educated amongst that class of dissenters who entitle themselves “ Independants,” or “ Congregationalists.” At a very early age my mind had imbibed the strongest and most obnoxious prejudices against Episcopacy, which, as I advanced in years, became more deeply rooted. I had been accustomed to hear tales of the haughty temper—the bitter spirit—the persecuting disposition of the Anglican Church—to hear of the gross ignorance in spiritual things, and of the ungodly lives of her clergy ; so that I could not, in my mind, dissociate the ideas of Episcopacy from those of heresy and sacrilegious ambition. I had learned to regard the Established Church as the beast in the Apocalypse, of which it is said, it “ *had horns like a lamb, but it spake like a dragon.*” I regarded it as a system of spiritual tyranny only—an engine of state policy, by which the tools of party were to be rewarded ; in fine as an iron rod in the hands of bigotry, by which it attempted to crush and destroy all who had the honesty or the courage to think for themselves.

This prejudice, by a natural consequence, (strange as to some it may appear,) extended itself to its ritual, its ceremonies, and even its sanctuaries ; these were often the objects of my

ridicule and derision. The official garments of its clergy, the formulary of its devotions, and even its most solemn observances, were regarded as worse than unmeaning—as partaking of the nature of an impious mockery of the Almighty. I looked upon its sacred edifices with much of the same class of feelings with which I should have regarded a Pagan temple; and though, in my boyhood, curiosity led me sometimes to visit them, that I might gaze upon their Gothic architecture, admire their painted windows, and feel what was imposing in their structure, whose “dim religious light” rendered them so suitable to aid devotion; yet I always felt, as if by so doing, I had contracted a sort of guilt, that I had been treading upon forbidden ground.

These sentiments continued, till in my twentieth year I had become a student preparing for the office of the ministry. During the first year of this my novitiate, I went with several of my compeers to witness the ordination of a young friend over a Congregational church in London. After the charge had been delivered by one minister to the pastor, a second minister (as is the custom) addressed a charge to the people. In the course of his sermon he admonished them of the evils of division—lamented the numerous quarrels and separations constantly occurring in their churches—stating that “such events gave too much appearance of reason for the observation of an old bishop, who had said of the Dissenters, that ‘*Division* is their sin, and *division* is their punishment.’”

This expression struck me with peculiar force. I looked around me, and saw that these churches were every where split into parties and factions. Subsequent observation has brought further confirmation on the point. Every where the ministers of that denomination lament the fact; no where is there a congregation of them for any considerable time in a state of peace. Turbulent spirits are every where struggling for the mastery, and throwing societies into a state of collision and confusion. The only exceptions are those in which the pastor, either by the weight of his property, or the skilfulness of his policy, can exercise despotic power. Discipline cannot be maintained. Few of these churches persevere for any considerable period in the doctrines of their founders. Multitudes have departed from the most rigid Calvinism, and gone over into Socinianism. Their own histories afford the strongest proof of this assertion, whilst the attempt recorded in the newspapers of a meeting of Congregational ministers in the month of May last, in London, to form what they called a Congregational Union, or, in other words, a sort of Presbyterianial government among themselves, affords an incontrovertible evidence of this truth to every reflecting mind.

Among this class of dissenters I was ordained. In the course, however, of my ministry, I was brought into contact with some clergymen of the Established Church. I found them to be men not only of decided but of exalted piety. By in-

tercourse with them, my antipathies were softened—my prejudices were gradually removed—my mind was rendered pervious to truth, and I became convinced that Episcopacy was not the horrid creature I had fancied it to be; nay, that a moderate Episcopacy carried with it all the marks of Apostolicity; and I learned that a Church existed in America truly Episcopal, but whose Episcopacy was unfettered by any of those trammels which its union with the State had fastened upon the Church of England.

I now find that it was not the true use, but the shameful abuse of Episcopacy, that formerly excited my disgust; that this excellent institution, like every other good thing, may be perverted; that as the manna which was angels' food became, by employing it contrary to the divine direction, offensively putrescent; that as the brazen serpent, by whose sight the Israelites were healed, had by superstition become converted into an object of idolatry; that as even the very grace of God had been by bad men turned into licentiousness; so Episcopacy, the ordinance of heaven, had been by some perverted from its legitimate use, to serve the purposes of avarice and ambition. But in this country I find it depurated from whatever of extraneous additions, or offensive appendage, it may have unhappily contracted in other lands. I think it to be the "*simplicity that is in Christ Jesus.*"

Having thus introduced the subject, and fearing it might savour somewhat of egotism to trace the

whole process of mind by which my present convictions have been evolved upon me, allow me to drop, as much as possible, the important pronoun *I*, and to lay before you, with as much succinctness as possible, the reasons which have enforced my decision.

But before I do this, it may not be amiss to say, that since my residence in this land, I have carefully examined the best writers of whom she can boast on the side of Presbyterianism, and that I find them utterly unsatisfactory. "The review of the Essays on Episcopacy," whilst discovering the hand of a master, and the mind of a genius, has done nothing whatever toward shaking my conviction, that prelacy was established by our Lord himself. This work has in it too much of the "*esprit de corps*," and in it the author has often indulged in that "*badinage*" which is unbefitting so solemn and important a subject. He seems, from the whole tenour of his composition, to be saying to his readers, "*Risum teneatis amici.*" He has evidently forgotten a maxim which he laid down in one of his sermons, when he spoke of the treatment which St. Paul met with from some of the Athenians; and of which he says, "some mocked;" "a short method of refuting the Gospel, and likely, from its convenience, to continue in favour and fashion."

Ridicule is no test of truth: there is nothing we may not make ridiculous by allowing to fancy an unbridled license: it is the great weapon of infidelity, and was recommended by that arch

deceiver Voltaire, as the best means of opposing Christianity. "Render" says he in his letters to D'Alembert, "these pedants (the clergy,) as enormously ridiculous as you can. Ridicule is every thing. It is the strongest of all weapons. A *bon mot* is as good a thing as a good book." In the same spirit, Shaftesbury advises as the best means of opposing Christianity, to employ "BART'LEMY FAIR* DROLLERY AGAINST it."

Still less was I pleased with the letters of a learned Presbyterian professor on the same side of the question. They appeared to me to be written so ungraciously—to manifest such an overweening conceit of self—to be characterized with such an air of pedantry—to enforce the "dicta" of their author with such an *ex cathedra* tone—to abound with so many subterfuges—to present such mutilated, garbled quotations from the Fathers—in a word, to be so replete with Jesuitical "*finesse*," that I could not but feel disgust at the exhibition. Whatever may be the state of my head, I trust I have an honest heart; I was early taught to despise duplicity, and I hope I almost instinctively revolt from it; but when I found this author, because it would serve his turn against Episcopalians, denouncing the shorter Epistles of Ignatius as spurious productions; and, at the same time, in another book which lay before me, found that the same man, because it would serve his purpose against the

* Bartholomew Fair.

Unitarians, vindicating the very same Epistles of Ignatius as genuine; I say, when I saw this, I felt that he could hardly claim my confidence; I could not repress the risings of honest indignation. If this be not verifying the old fable of blowing hot and cold with the same mouth, what is? I was convinced that whatever powers of reasoning he might possess, he was deficient in that candour and consistency which would alone command my respect; that however I might view him as a subtle and wily sophist, I ought not to regard him as a sound and honest reasoner.

Suppose, I thought, that a witness in a court of judicature should thus act; suppose such an one, when his own interest was in some measure concerned, should give evidence that a certain document set up by the other party was unworthy of credit; and suppose that at an after period, when he wished to set at nought a different antagonist, against whom the aforesaid document bore, that in such case he should give evidence that the document ought to be accredited, what would be the feelings expressed by the court at the discovery of his contradictory testimony? * *

* * * * *

In my next I shall enter upon the reasons which convince me of the legitimacy and divine appointment of Episcopacy.

LETTER II.

EPISCOPACY CONSIDERED ON THE GROUND OF EXPEDIENCY.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

AMONG the numerous reasons which have enforced conviction upon my mind in this important subject, the following may be adduced; the least and lowest arguments being placed first, as is natural in the order of distribution.

Expediency may be considered as affording presumptive evidence.

Whilst many Dissenters* contend that the platform of their Church government is accurately laid down in the writings of the New Testament, a very large number of them insist that no form of Church government is at all prescribed therein; but that THE FOUR FOLLOWING ARE THE ONLY

* The writer takes this occasion, once for all, to state, that in the use of this term, it is not his intention to offend. He has learned, since his arrival in this country, that here the application of the word to those who differ from the Episcopal Church is objected to. He has naturally adopted a mode of speech familiar to him from long habit, and has deemed it best in these letters to retain it, as expressing in one word what might otherwise require some circum-
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RULES PRESENTED IN HOLY SCRIPTURE UPON THAT POINT, viz.—“*Let all things be done decently and in order.*” “*Let all things be done to edifying.*” “*Let all things be done with charity.*” And, “*Do all things without murmuring.*” Thus they make, in fact, expediency to be the basis of all Church government. And frequently do they assert, that as God has presented no particular mode of government to the nations of the earth, but has left them to institute such as may seem to their wisdom most fitting, so neither has he appointed any special form of government in his Church, but that he has left it to Christians to make such regulations as may accord with their climates, and habits, and peculiar circumstances; hence, whilst among all the Congregational churches there are some points of resemblance, there are also other points of dissimilarity. Uniformity is regarded as non-essential.

Admitting then, for the sake of argument, the proposition, “That expediency is the basis of Church government,” will not Episcopacy derive from it powerful support? All the nations of mankind, however free their government may have been; even those republicks which have manifested the greatest jealousy of their liberties, have agreed that power must be lodged somewhere—that officers must be appointed as the guardians of their fellow-citizens, the judges and expositors of their laws, the executors of their decrees, the presidents of their assemblies—that these should be armed with authority, that they

might be "*a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well.*" It matters not that they have guarded well these powers, and accurately defined their limits, lest they should be abused. The very fact of these limitations shows the conviction entertained of their importance; that they supposed a body politic must have a head—that all its members could not be in a state of perfect parity—that the weight of government could not with safety be reposed upon the weak and ignorant, but upon the wise and the influential—that necessity required for the public weal different grades in society, and various officers invested with superiority and command. Hence the archons at Athens, the senators, the triumviri, the decemviri, the consuls at Rome, the senators and the doge at Venice, and not to mention others, the congress, the president, vice-president, and various functionaries of these United States.

We have then a lesson of wisdom gathered from the united experience of all ages, ancient and modern, far and near, that society must have laws, that laws require officers, and that officers must be invested with authority and power; without these all will be anarchy; disorder and confusion will universally obtain; the wicked and mighty will riot in tyranny, and will prowl like beasts of prey upon their fellow-men. It is also universally admitted, that all men are not fitted to rule—that all are not qualified for judging; but that each man must have his distinct and

separate work, to which his talents are adapted : the place for the man, and the man for the place. Thus the fabrick of society is cemented and strengthened throughout all its parts ; harmony, order, and happiness are established universally.

And must it be otherwise in the Church ? Is not this society composed of beings differing in almost endless variety from each other ? Are all fit to minister therein ? Are all fit to rule ? Are all fit to discharge the great official duties which such a community requires, or to enforce the laws by which order amongst them should be maintained ? There must be some, then, to fill stations of greater importance than others, who shall attend to the administration of the laws by which it is governed, and who, possessing ability, shall also be invested with authority to exercise salutary discipline. Nor can this be done unless there be different grades and stations, the holders of which shall have it in charge to fulfil these several and important functions.

Does Presbytery effect this ? An appeal to its disjointed state, its conflicting opinions, the antipathies and animosities of its members, will give the answer. It is the lamentation of the old men, that “ men of corrupt minds ” have entered in amongst them ; that they who professed at their ordination to embrace the standards of their faith, teach doctrines utterly opposed to these standards ; that these men are deluging the Church with a flood of novelties, which they have no power to repel or restrain ; in fine, they admit that there

is no authority amongst them to exercise discipline, or to enforce their laws. Whatever the Presbyterian Church in this country may once have been, it now presents to the eye of a calm observer—we speak it not with exultation, but regret—nothing but a confused mass of discordant elements, in a state of dreadful collision, like the primitive chaos; (Tohu Bohu.) “*Every man does what is right in the sight of his own eyes.*” Many are striving daily to advance some new doctrine, whilst the stranger and more absurd it is, the more popular is it likely to become. Its ceremonies, government, order, where are they? Alas! in Presbytery they are no where to be found; as the record of the last General Assembly in this country mournfully evinces.

Is the case better with the Congregationalists? Let their histories decide. From the days of Brown and Robinson, their first founders, down to the present hour, their churches have ever been the arena of discord. Like the winds seen by the prophet in vision, which strove upon the sea, and gave birth to hideous monsters; so the contending elements of their passions have, from these troubled waters, called forth heresies the most gigantic and frightful to desolate the globe. Witness the Socinianism of the western part of England, as recorded by Bogue and Bennet, the historians of Congregationalism; and of Massachusetts, as exhibited to our own eyes; not to say any thing of the horrible and frantic excesses of the Independents and Anabaptists of Munster,

as recorded in every ecclesiastical history of their times—it is “confusion, worse confounded;” their churches resemble any thing rather than the Church of Christ.

Abstract argument is however rendered unnecessary, by the existence of fact. There is one fact which, however anomalous it may appear, cannot be contravened, and which speaks upon this subject more than a thousand arguments. The London Missionary Society, which, whilst it professes a truly Catholic spirit, and enlists all classes in the number of its contributors, is in truth the great Missionary Society of the Congregationalists, to which they all belong, and which they claim as “*our Society*.” This Society, which is governed by a committee in London, of whom by far the largest proportion is Congregationalists, who, to all intents and purposes, are its prime movers—this Society, after serious deliberation, sent out, about sixteen years ago, a minister of high standing and talent in their connexion, (whom they prevailed upon to resign his charge in Aberdeen for that purpose,) to take the superintendence of their missions in Africa, and invested him with power as their representative, to overlook and control their missionaries in that quarter. Accounts of this appointment, and of his success, may be seen in their printed annual reports, and their quarterly chronicles, in which they call him “The *Superintendent* of the Society’s Missions in Africa.”

But there is one part of this subject of which

they have made little or no mention. It is this. Some of the churches previously settled at the Cape, and then in connexion with the London Missionary Society, objected to this appointment, as being contrary to their characters as Congregational churches—an invasion of their independent rights. They refused to submit to this delegated authority. They sent home to the Society remonstrances, disclaiming their right to appoint over them “a BISHOP.” At length Dr. Thom, one of their missionaries, and pastor of the Dutch church at the Cape, was sent to England for the express purpose of appealing against what some of the churches by whom he was commissioned considered a gross violation of their rights; but he appealed in vain. During the stay of Dr. Thom in London, he related to the writer hereof the fact, with strong expressions of indignation. The superintendent was, however, continued, and the remonstrant churches seceded; in consequence, Dr. Thom, of whom mention, about twenty years since, was made in all the Society’s reports, and of whom, in almost every month’s “Evangelical Magazine,” some account was given—Dr. Thom’s name is now scarcely, if ever mentioned.

Thus have the Congregationalists, by their actions, and “actions speak louder than words,” in establishing a superintendent, (or in other words, a bishop, for it is one and the same thing,) over their missionary churches, announced unto the world, that, in their opinion, Episcopacy, at least

in that quarter, is by far the most expedient mode of Church government.

Upon this point an ingenuous mind will ask no further proof.

LETTER III.

EPISCOPACY SANCTIONED BY THE INSTITUTIONS OF JUDAISM.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

THE institutions of Judaism tend still more strongly to support the claims of Episcopacy.

The whole of the Levitical economy was instituted by God himself. Its appointment was attended by the most awful and august solemnities which could impress the minds of the Israelites with a sense of its weight and importance, and which could call forth towards it their reverence and obedience. There was nothing in it, however minute, but was prescribed by the Most High himself; and lest any addition, of whatever kind, might be made to it, or any subtraction be made from it, Moses was frequently reminded of the necessity of adhering to the model which had been exhibited to him on the top of the Mount Sinai; he had it repeatedly enjoined upon him, "*See that thou do all things according to the pattern shown thee in the mount.*"

This dispensation, then, was the product of divine wisdom, upon which the Most High had

lavished much skill, and power, and glory, because he designed it to be the type or picture of "*heavenly things.*" "*The law was a shadow of good things to come.*" The whole system of sacrificature in the Mosaic Church—her priests, victims, laws, and government, all were typical; but of what? no where is she said to be a type only of the present dispensation, of the New Testament; but, in the language of St. Paul, to have been "*an example and shadow of heavenly things;*" "*patterns of things in the heavens;*" "*the heavens, into which Christ himself has entered, to appear in the presence of God for us.*"

In this Church Jehovah instituted a priesthood, consisting of three gradations of ministers, viz. the Levites, or ordinary priests, whose office it was to attend to the usual work in the outer court of the tabernacle. Over these presided a higher grade of priests, whose duty it was to superintend the Levites, to burn incense in the holy place, and to offer, upon the altar in that court, the shew-bread: these were termed the "chief priests." Over these again presided the "high priest," whose office it was to superintend the whole priesthood, who only could perform some functions peculiar to his rank and office, and who, once a year, might enter alone into the "holy of holies." Thus in this Church, divinely organized, were three different grades of ministers, each one rising above the other.

It has become customary with many writers, (for what reason does not appear,) to set the Old

Testament Churches, and those of the New, in direct opposition to each other. These persons forget, that as the New Testament is the continuation, the commentary, the illustration of the Old; so also the latter Church bears the same relation to the former. Both Churches have the same Founder, the same object of faith, the same hope presented to their view, and were both instituted with the same design. The dispensations, indeed, are changed, but Christianity was the religion of the Jewish as much as it is of the Apostolic Church. This is evident from various grounds, but to enter into any detail of these is needless, since we have the testimony, upon the point, of an inspired apostle, who tells us that "*Christ was the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;*" that "*to him gave all the prophets witness;*" that "*Moses counted the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt;*" that the Israelites in the wilderness did, equally with us, "*drink of the same spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ.*"

Wherein then lies the difference between the two Churches? St. Paul tells us, it is that "*life and immortality are MADE CLEAR by the Gospel.*" "*We are not come unto Mount Sinai, but unto Mount Zion.*" "*We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, crying, Abba, Father.*" That is, the Jewish Church had respect to a Messiah who was to come, God to be made manifest in the flesh: the New Testament Church regards the Mes-

siah as already come, God as already incarnated. The Jews looked forward for an atonement to be afterwards offered up and presented to God: the New Testament Church looks back upon the sacrifice as already presented and "*appearing in the presence of God*" for them. The former Church was in a state of infancy: the latter is farther advanced towards maturity. The one lived in the darkness of the night when Pagan idolatry overspread the world, being "*as a light shining in a dark place*:" the other lives in the twilight, of which it is said, "*the night is far spent, the day is at hand*," and on whom the bright and morning star, the precursor of perfect day, has arisen. Thus the only change in the dispensation relates to the difference between a Messiah about to come, and a Messiah actually arrived; between the spirit of bondage which characterized the former, and the Spirit of freedom and adoption which designates the latter believers.

The Church, then, is still one, though existing under different dispensations. The incarnation, sufferings, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of Christ are past; as such they are expressed in the ordinances of the New Testament Church; but they were expressed as future in the Jewish Church. Are not, also, all the self-same things set before our view in one dispensation as in the other? If the Jews were to enter into the tabernacle by washing in the laver which stood at its entrance, and exhibited

their faith in the sacrifice offered on the altar; so Christians enter into the Church by the washing of regeneration, and profess their faith also in the blood of the atonement. If, after these engagements, the Jew might enter into the holy place, feasting there, in the presence of God, upon the sacrifice, and rejoicing in the light of the golden candlestick; so Christians feed in the sanctuary upon their sacrifice, and enjoy the light of divine revelation. If, in fine, the Jew, by Aaron's entrance within the vail, was taught to look for a glorious immortality in an unseen world; so Christians, by the entrance of their Saviour into heaven, are taught to look for a new heaven and a new earth; and that "*unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*"

The constitution and design of both Churches are evidently, then, the same; both being modifications of a Church *militant*; both destined to terminate in one which is *triumphant*. Both were designed to be typical, to figure forth, to represent one and the self-same object, viz. "*the new Jerusalem from above, which is the mother of us all.*" This latter Church, as it is not yet completed, is now INVISIBLE; but it will be the everlasting state of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour. Prophets and apostles unite in bearing witness to her as about to be established, when the present dispensation of things shall have passed away. But of her, both the Jewish and Christian Churches were patterns or figures. The

New Testament Church is that which Christ by the apostles established; and being visible, is a type of that which at present is invisible. Under both Testaments, therefore, the two Churches are one in constitution and design. Their points of resemblance are, that both are visible; both lead the mind to the anticipation of the future state; both are schools in which the children of God are nursed and trained up into a meetness for their everlasting inheritance. Both must have temporal laws, sensible rites, ceremonies, or ordinances; both must have office-bearers, discipline, rules of order and worship. In all these respects there is a perfect correspondence between them.

Surely, then, if both Churches are the same in the object of their worship, sacrifices, Mediator, promises, and sanctuary,—they must be the same in the design of their priesthood, which is typical also. To argue that the platform of the Christian Church is to be found, not in the tabernacle or temple, but in the synagogue, is to reject the appointments of God for those of men; it is to prefer the inventions of the fallible creature before the institutions of the infallible God; it is to blot out one part of the constitution of heaven itself, and to approve of the suggestions of carnal reason, rather than the dictates of divine wisdom—a conduct, to say the least of it, to the last degree erroneous.

When, then, the abrogation of the Levitical economy, and the introduction of the Christian

dispensation took place, what can be more reasonable than that the inspired apostles, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, should take, as the rule of their Church ministry and government, the very same which had been by God himself prescribed to Moses? Every principle of reason would dictate that they should do so; and that this was the case, may be evinced, as will hereafter appear, from the records of the Scriptures, and from the testimony of the Fathers.

LETTER IV.

TESTIMONIES OF PRESBYTERIANS AND OTHER ANTI-EPISCOPALIANS IN FAVOUR OF EPISCO- PACY.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

THE admissions of those who have adhered to a different form of Church government, but who, in their writings, have borne either direct or indirect testimonies in favour of Episcopacy, present a further argument in aid of establishing its divine origin. "*Fas est ab hoste doceri.*"

Here, however, a considerable difficulty occurs; but it arises not from the paucity, but the multitude of these testimonies; for, after that a selection has been made from the very wisest and best of these writers, a much larger number must necessarily be omitted; and many must be altogether neglected, whose testimonies also might perhaps, in the view of some persons, be considered as affording equal, or even still stronger evidence.

Doddridge, an eminently learned man, and a decided Congregationalist, admits that DIFFER-

ENT GRADES OF CLERGY *existed in the time of Ignatius.* His words are—"The distinction between bishops and presbyters does not appear to be of earlier date than the time of Ignatius."—*Lect. cxvi. § 17.*

Calvin, the Geneva reformer, speaks of the ordination of Timothy as being the work of the Apostle Paul himself, and not of the presbyters. His words are—"His expression in the other Epistle, of '*the laying on of the hands of the presbytery,*' I apprehend not to signify a company of elders, but to denote '*THE ORDINATION ITSELF;*' as if he had said—"Take care that the grace which thou receivedst by the laying on of hands when I ordained thee, be not in vain."—*Instit. B. IV. c. iv. § 2.*

"They named all on whom was enjoined the office of teaching, presbyters. They chose one of their number in every city, to whom in particular they gave the title of Bishop; lest from equality, as usually happens, dissensions should arise."—*Calv. Inst. B. IV. c. iv. § 2.*

"If they will give us such an hierarchy, in which the bishops have such a pre-eminence as that they do not refuse to be subject unto Christ, I will confess that *they are worthy of all anathemas*, if any such there be, *who will not reverence it, and submit themselves to it with the utmost obedience.*"—*Calvin on the Necessity of reforming the Church.*—*Johan. Calvin. Tract. Theol. omnes, p. 69.*

Beza, the celebrated, reformer, in his letter to Archbishop Whitgift, writes:—

“In my writings touching Church government, I ever impugned the Romish hierarchy, but never intended to touch or impugn the Church of England.”

The same author writes—

“It was essential, that, by the perpetual ordination of God, *it was, it is, and it will be necessary* that some one in the presbytery, chief both in place and dignity, should preside, to govern the proceedings, *by that right which is given him of God.*”—*On the Degrees of the Ministry*, chap. xxiii.

“If there are any, as you will not easily persuade me, who would reject the whole order of bishops, God *forbid that any man in his senses should assent to their madness.*”—*Ad Saraviam*, c. xviii.

Bucer, another of the reformers, thus writes:—

“By the perpetual observation of all the churches, *even from the apostles’ time*, we see that *it seemed good to the Holy Ghost*, that among presbyters, to whom the procuration of churches was chiefly committed, there should be one that should have the care or charge of divers churches, and the whole ministry committed to him; and, by reason of that charge, he was above the rest; and therefore the name of Bishop was peculiarly attributed to those chief rulers.”—*De Cura Curat.* p. 251.

Jacobus Lectius, one of the senators of Geneva, in his work addressed and dedicated to the synodics and senate, uses the following language:—

“ We maintain that those are true and lawful bishops whom St. Paul describes in his Epistles to Timothy and Titus; and we do not deny but that there were such formerly in that great kingdom of Great-Britain, and that at this very day there are such bishops there.”

Raimond Gaches, one of the pastors at Charenton, and a man of great eminence in the French Church, thus writes to Mr. Brevint:—

“ Would to God we had no other differences with the bishops of France but their dignity! How cheerfully should I submit myself to them! although you know that their yoke is heavy, far heavier than that of the bishops in England. How comes it to pass, then, that those of your Presbyterians that are great, understanding, and wise men, have such an aversion against moderate Episcopacy? And why do they refuse to have communion with Ignatius, Polycarp, Cyprian, Chrysostom, and all that holy company of the purest antiquity?”—*Durele's View*, &c. p. 125.

Bishop Carleton, one of the British delegates to the Synod of Dort, gives the following statement:—

“ I openly protested in the synod, that it was a strange proposition which had been inserted in said Confession, namely, *that Christ instituted an*

equality among the ministers of the Gospel. I publicly declared that it could no where be shown that Christ had ordained such an equality: that he had chosen twelve apostles and seventy disciples, and that those apostles were invested with an authority and superintendency over all others, and that the Church had constantly and uninterruptedly maintained the same subordination. I appealed in this affair to all the ancients, and to all men of learning of the present age; yea, I earnestly challenged any man in the synod to prove the contrary. The Lord Bishop of Salisbury is my witness, and all the doctors that were with me, for I was the mouth of them all; and there was not one man in the assembly that pretended to contradict me, whence we justly concluded they were all of our opinion.”—*Brandt’s Hist. of Refor.* vol. iii. p. 288.

Bishop Hall, also another of the delegates to the aforesaid synod, states as follows:—

“When the Bishop of Llandaff had, in a speech of his, touched upon Episcopal government, and showed that the want thereof gave opportunities to those divisions which were then on foot in the Netherlands, Bogermannus, the president of the assembly, stood up, and in good allowance of what had been spoken, said, ‘*Domine, nos non sumus adeo felices.*’ (Alas, my lord, we are not so happy.) Neither did he speak this in a fashionable compliment, (neither the person, nor the hearers, nor the place were fit for that,) but

in a sad gravity and conscionable profession of a known truth: neither would he, being the mouth of that select assembly, have thought it safe to pass those words before the deputies of the States, and so many venerable divines of foreign parts, (besides their own,) if he had not supposed this so clear a truth as that synod would neither disrelish or contradict.”—*Bishop Hall’s Div. Right of Epis.* part i. sect. 4.

Peter du Moulin, an eminent theological professor of the French Presbyterian Church, writes as follows:—

“ Our adversaries unjustly accuse us to be enemies of the Episcopal order; for we must be altogether ignorant in history, if we do not know that antiquity speaks honourably of that degree. Eusebius, in his Chronicle, witnesseth, that a year after our Lord’s death, James, our Lord’s brother, was established Bishop of Jerusalem; and that, ten years after, Euodius was created bishop of Antioch; and that after James succeeded Simon in the bishoprick of Jerusalem; from whence descended the succession of bishops in Jerusalem. St. Jerome, in his book of ecclesiastical writers, saith that Polycarp, St. John’s disciple, was by that apostle made bishop of Smyrna. In the same book he saith that St. Paul established Timothy bishop of Ephesus, and Titus bishop of Crete. And Tertullian, in the thirty-second chapter of the book of Prescriptions, calleth those churches ‘ apostolical churches, and buds and

sprigs of the apostles, whose bishops were established by the apostles,' &c. If sometimes we speak against the authority of bishops, we condemn not the Episcopal order in itself, but speak only of the corruption which the Church of Rome has introduced into it."—*P. du Moulin's Buckler of Faith*, Lond. edit. 1631, p. 345.

Zanchy, the intimate friend of Calvin, one of the greatest and most learned men among the reformers, gives us the following statements:—

"So also we acknowledge that from a perpetual succession of bishops in some Church, not indeed in every one, but in one which hath joined to it a continuation also of apostolic doctrine, such a Church may be shown to be truly apostolic; such formerly was the Church of Rome, and the succession of its bishops, to the time even of Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, and some others; so that not undeservedly those Fathers were accustomed to appeal to her, and others like her, and to refer to her the heretics of their times. So, indeed, as to those Churches in which the apostolic doctrine, with Christian discipline and the legitimate administration of the sacraments, is retained pure, although they were not founded by apostles, nor have a perpetual succession of bishops even from the times of the apostles, nevertheless we acknowledge them for true Apostolic Churches, and we say with Tertullian and other Fathers, that 'they ought to be acknowledged.' So, on the other hand, those which were planted and

watered by apostles, although they may be able distinctly to show a continued and never-interrupted succession of high priests, yet if they are unable to show, together with a continuation of bishops, a continuation also of Christian and apostolic doctrine, we confess indeed that they were Christian and Apostolic Churches, but now can we by no means acknowledge them for such.”—*De Ecclesia Militante*, vol. viii. fol. 537. Gen. edit. 1619.

“For we do not depart entirely and in all things from the Roman Church, but in those things only in which she hath departed from the ancient and pure Apostolic Church, and so hath departed from herself; nor do we leave her with any other mind than this, that if she, being corrected, will return to the original state of the Church, we also may return to her, and moreover hold communion with her in her meetings; which, that it may be so, we pray our Lord Jesus with our whole soul; for what can be more desirable to any pious man, than that where we are born again by baptism, there also we may live, even to the end, only in the Lord?”

“I, Jerome Zanchy, with all my family, wish this may be testified to the Church of Christ through all eternity.”—*Idem*. fol. 540.

“For we know that our God is a God of order, and not of confusion; and that the Church is preserved by order, and destroyed by irregularity. For which reason he had instituted many and divers orders of ministers, not only formerly in Israel, but also subsequently in his Church, col-

lected from both Jews and Gentiles; and for the same reason hath left it free to his Churches, that they should add more, or not add them, only that that should be done to edification. Therefore, notwithstanding that at first all ministers of the word were indiscriminately called pastors, bishops, and elders, and were also of equal authority; afterwards one began to be preferred by his other colleagues over all the rest; not indeed as a lord, but as a rector or governor in an academy, and to him especially the care of the whole Church was committed, so that by way of pre-eminence (Κατ' ἐξοχὴν) he alone was accustomed to be called by the name of bishop and pastor, the rest of his fellow priests being content with the name of presbyter; so that in every city one only began to be bishop and many presbyters, and this we think can be easily proved."—*Idem. de Gubernatione Ecclesiæ Militantis*, fol. 545.

Grotius, long celebrated as one of the most learned men of his age, was a Dutch Presbyterian. He wrote against Episcopacy; yet even he admits its existence in the earliest ages of the Church, and that it was universally received. His words are in his notes on Acts xxi. 18. "He of the apostles who was at Jerusalem, performed the office which afterwards the bishop did, and therefore called together the presbyters: unless perhaps this James was the brother of the Lord, not the apostle, but the bishop. Of the episcopate, therefore, that is, the superiority of one pastor

above the rest, we first determine that it is repugnant to no divine law; if any one think otherwise, that is, if any one condemn the whole ancient Church of FOLLY, or even of IMPIETY, the burden of proof, beyond doubt, lies upon him. The very ministry instituted by the apostles, sufficiently proves that equality of the ecclesiastical officers was not commanded by Christ: we therefore lay down this, which is undoubtedly true, that it neither can nor ought to be found fault with; in which we have agreeing with us, Zanchius, Chemnitius, Heinengius, Calvin, Melancthon, Bucer, nay, even Beza, as thus far he says, ‘that one certain person chosen by the judgment of the rest of his co-presbyters, was chief (πρῶτος) over the presbytery, and was permanently so.’”

Not to multiply quotations (which were easy) from this author, of a similar kind, one more only shall be added. “Neither indeed does antiquity declare that to be true, which some now boldly affirm, that they who were evangelists could not be bishops; for as long as they traversed provinces, they performed the office of evangelists; but when beholding a plentiful harvest in one place, they believed it should be cherished by their continual presence, without doubt, presiding in the Presbytery, they performed the office of bishops.”—*Gro. de Ver.* chap. xi, § 3.

Melancthon, the companion and fellow-labourer of Luther, says, “I would to God it lay in me to

restore the government of bishops, for I see what manner of Church we shall have, the ecclesiastical polity being dissolved. I do see that hereafter there will grow up a greater tyranny in the Church than ever was before."—*Apol. Aug. Con.* p. 305.

Was he a prophet? surely if not, he was wonderfully endowed with the talent of perspicacity.

To these might be added a long list of their cotemporaries, men of the first standing, of the greatest literature and piety, amongst the Reformers.

In later times, men of the greatest eminence, and renowned for their literature in the Reformed Churches, have uttered similar sentiments.

The noted Jean Daillé, pastor of the church at Charenton, a vehement stickler for Presbytery, and who has been quoted by the author of "the Review, &c." as bearing strongly against Episcopacy, in one of his sermons thus writes: "*Do the work of an Evangelist.*" "It is true, that if we confine ourselves simply to the form and origin of the word *evangelist*, it signifies, in general, every man who evangelizes, that is to say, who announces or preaches the Gospel, whatever may be the order he sustains. But it is evident that, in the usage of the writers of the New Testament, it is the name of a DISTINCT PECULIAR CHARGE, and not common to all the ministers of the word of God. St. Paul teaches us so clearly in the Epistle to the Ephesians, where,

recounting the different sorts of ministers which Jesus has established in his Church for its edification, he says, ‘ *He gave some to be apostles, and others to be prophets, and others to be evangelists, and others, in fine, to be pastors and teachers.*’ There you see he takes the word evangelist in the same light as that of apostle and prophet, of pastor and teacher, for an express charge instituted by the Lord, and that he distinguishes and separates it from the others, of which he makes the enumeration. And we learn also, from the rank which he gives to each one of these ministers, that the evangelist was less than the apostle and prophet, but greater than the pastor and teacher. The evangelist then was above the common pastors of each church, and his rank was in the midst of them and the apostles, higher than the former, but far beneath that of the apostles, whose ministry was SUPREME, exalted over all the Church, in the throne of an established power and glory, to judge the whole Israel of God. The example of Timothy and of Philip evince to us that this order of ministry was not definitely attached to an individual flock, but had this in common with the apostleship, that it was employed in all places indifferently, according as occasion might require; to announce the Gospel, to lay the foundation of the faith, or to establish it; to regulate the churches, or to remedy the disorders, if such should occur, against which the pastors and elders could not provide; these evangelists were as the assistants (les aides) of the holy apostles, who

helped them and served them, either accompanying them, or going to execute their orders in the places whither they sent them, according to the necessities of the Church.”—*Ser. xxx. sur l'Épître ii. à Tim.*

“Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with laying on of the hands of the presbytery, or of the ministers. It is true that he here says, (2 Tim. ii. 5.) it was he himself who imposed his hands upon Timothy, whilst in the other passage he attributes this imposition of hands to the assembly of presbyters or ministers. But there is no difficulty in this statement, since this action might be truly attributed both to St. Paul and to the company of ministers, in the midst of whom it was done. All the company, after that Timothy had been presented to it by the Church, having approved his gifts, resolved that he should be received into this charge. Afterwards, according to this decree, or this ordination of the company, the apostle St. Paul, *as its chief and its president*, performed in its name, with its consent and its authority, the *ceremony of ordination*, imposing his hands upon Timothy, and consecrating him to the holy ministry by *his* prayer and by *his* benediction; whence it appears that it was both he and his company who laid hands on him; the company by its voice and its assistance, by its assent and by the authority of its decree, St. Paul as the head and principal member of the company, and the executor of its decree.”—*Serm. iii. sur la ii. Épître. à Tim.*

Benedict Pictet, professor of theology at Geneva, was a profound scholar, so noted, that an abridgment of his theology in Latin, is made the text-book in several of the English theological seminaries, and indeed in some of the Presbyterian seminaries of a similar kind in America, where he is deservedly held in high esteem; but his testimony is still stronger, he says in his larger work, written in French, and entitled "*La Théologie Chrétienne*:"—

"We must not doubt but that in each consistory there was a pastor, who presided in the assemblies, collecting the votes and pronouncing the determination. Whether it were that the order of his reception, or the determination of his brethren, gave him this rank; on this account it is that he is spoken of as the angel of the churches. Apoc. c. ii." In a marginal note to this expression, he says, "The Jews gave the title of angel to their HIGH PRIEST, and also to the ruler of their synagogue."

"A little time after the death of the apostles, one of the pastors was called Bishop, and had some pre-eminence over the others, in the Church of Alexandria, after the death of Mark, and in other Churches; although St. Polycarp, in writing to the Philippians, speaks only to them of the submission they ought to maintain to their presbyters and deacons, without making any mention of their bishop, who, in truth, at that time might be dead."

To this is affixed the following marginal note:

"We must confess, that in a letter of Adrian,

referred to by Flavius Vopiscus, mention is made of a patriarch; but it is probable that the reference is to a patriarch of the Jews, as many learned men have proved. The Jews had one patriarch at Babylon until the thirteenth age, and at Tiberias till the commencement of the fifteenth age."

"I do not make these remarks as if I condemned the churches where Episcopacy is established, I am convinced that the Reformed Churches ought not to disquiet one another upon the subject of exterior government, and that it ought to be left free to all the churches to govern themselves in the way which shall seem to them most expedient. True it is, that the Confessions of Faith of the churches of France say, that all the pastors have an equal authority and an equal power under Jesus Christ; but the design of the Confession was not to exclude all sort of subordination among the pastors; it EXCLUDES ONLY THE ROMAN HIERARCHY; and it has not defined the right of pastors as a matter of divine, universal, and perpetual right; for never have they contended to reduce all the churches to the same exterior form. This is evident from the union which has always subsisted between the Reformed Churches of Geneva, of Switzerland, of France, and of Holland, on the one part, and the English Church on the other. And this is further evident, because a great number of theologians, attached to the Confessions of France and Holland, have recognised the English Episcopacy as a legitimate order. We may see thereon the letters of Calvin

to Cranmer, to Grindal, his treatise on the necessity of the reformation, his letter to Edward Seymour, in the year 1543. Beza's book against Saravia. The English Church has always been held in the highest estimation by the Church at Geneva. We may see thereupon, what says Jacobus Lectius, the famous civilian and counselor of our republick, in his book against 'Le Code Fabrien,' liv. xi. p. 241. The letter of the celebrated Mr. Diodati, which was printed by Mr. Durel, and that of Spanheim to the great Usher."

With respect to France, the theologians of this kingdom have expressed their sentiments on various occasions. We have only to read the letter of Mr. Drelincourt to Mr. Brevint, that of Mr. Bochart upon the subject of Episcopacy, that which Mr. Amyraut has written in various letters, Mr. Louis Cappel in his essays, the letters of Messrs. Rondolet and Guyon, those of Mr. Du Bosc, of Mr. Le Moyne, of Mr. L'Angle, and of Mr. Claude to the illustrious Bishop of London.—*Pict. Theol. Chret.* tom. ii. pp. 396, 397.

In the second age there appears then to have been only three orders, bishops, presbyters, and deacons."—*Idem.* p. 397.

Mr. Du Bosc, of whom mention has previously been made, was pastor of the church at Rouen: though often invited to preside over them by the church at Charenton, such was his attachment to his people, that he would not leave them; such was the high estimation in which his talents were

held, that more than once was a bishoprick offered him by the French king, if he would conform to the Roman Catholic Church. He was looked up to by the French Protestants, as the greatest man in their community, and repeatedly was he charged with the office of delegate from the Presbyterian churches to plead their cause with their king. It is not too much to say of him, that he was the greatest divine in Europe of his day. Bayle, in his dictionary, narrates the following anecdote:—“When I was at Caen,” says the celebrated Menage, (who was a Catholic,) “I heard the minister Du Bosc preach; I never heard a minister *preach* but then.” The following is an extract from a letter of his addressed to Mr. Brevint, chaplain to the British king, in 1650:—

“I learn that he” (the king) “purposes to re-establish the Episcopacy; but in making it, to be so moderate and reformed, that in it shall be still seen all the air of the ancient Church discipline. This is a design worthy of him: it will secure to him the benedictions of heaven and earth, and gain for him the approbation of all good men. For though we live under another mode of discipline in our kingdom, let it not nevertheless be imagined that we disapprove of Episcopacy, when it is well and legitimately administered. How could any one entertain such an opinion of us, after the declaration so solemn which Calvin has made thereupon in his epistle to Cardinal Landolet, in speaking of the order and dignity of bishops, when they limit themselves by the rules

of their duty, and by the boundaries of a Christian moderation? 'If,' says he, '*there be found persons who refuse to respect such a hierarchy, I hold them deserving every kind of anathema.*' I might add multitudes of other formal passages from our Reformers, but this is sufficient to make known to all the world what is the sentiment of our churches; and I should remember that I am writing a letter, and not composing a book. We condemn, in truth, the abuse of Episcopacy. We detest the pride, the pomp, and luxury of it, so contrary to the humility and simplicity of the ministers of Christ Jesus. We condemn the great and immense riches which serve only to corrupt those who possess them, and to carry them into the worldly-mindedness of the age, to somnolize them in ease, and make them to despise the little and to offend the great—to maintain the life, not of pastors of the sheep, but of lords of the court and governors of provinces, only to deck themselves after the fashion of her who is all glittering with purple, adorned with precious stones and pearls, and who holds in her hand a golden cup. We condemn the tyranny which converts a primacy of order into a supreme domination. We cannot suffer these Diotrefes, who so love to be the first, that they will tyrannize over the heritage of the Lord. We reject the maxim which maintains that a bishop among the clergy is not as a consul in his senate, but as a prince in his court, and as a king amongst his officers and his counsellors. This is directly op-

posed to the words of our Saviour, who said to his apostles, "*The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that are great exercise authority; but it shall not be so with you.*" In fine, we cannot allow that a bishop assume to himself all the authority of the presbytery; that he alone should have the power of ordination, of deposition, of excommunication; and that the government of the Church should be lodged in his hands alone.

" But, with these exceptions, we honour and esteem, as much as any, the Episcopacy. We know that, for more than 1500 years, (written in 1650,) it has been established in the Church; that it has advantageously served Christianity; that it has produced great men, holy martyrs, and admirable lights, which have illumined the world, and will yet illumine it, by their writings. We acknowledge that this order has singular advantages which cannot be found in Presbyterian discipline. If we have followed the latter in our churches, it is not because we have any aversion for the former. It is not because we esteem Episcopacy less accordant with the nature of the Gospel, less proper for the Church, less worthy the condition of the true flocks of the Lord; but because NECESSITY obliges us to it: because the reformation having begun in our kingdom amongst the people and simple ecclesiastics, the places of bishops remain filled by those of a contrary religion; and from this cause we were constrained to content ourselves with having pastors and

elders, from fear of opposing in one city bishop against bishop, which would doubtless have caused furious troubles and implacable wars.

“ If the bishops had at first embraced the reformation, I do not doubt but that their order would have been maintained in the ecclesiastical polity ; and I find a convincing proof of it in an epistle of Martyr ; it is the fifty-seventh, which he writes to Theodore Beza. He speaks to him of the bishop of Troy, in Champagne, where Christ had collected a large and numerous Church. He says that the prelate of this Church, having known the truth, set about preaching it publickly ; and as he was an excellent man, that he powerfully advanced the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. But that having entertained a scruple with regard to his vocation, which he feared might not be legitimate, he assembled the elders of the Reformed Church, to know from them if they would acknowledge him as their bishop ; and besought them maturely to deliberate thereupon : which having done with all requisite prudence and wisdom, they unanimously declared that they received him as their true and legitimate bishop. Who doubts but that if the other prelates of the kingdom had followed his example, and given, like him, glory to God, they also would have remained in their stations, and that their dignity would have been preserved to them ? since Martyr, in this epistle, approves both the action of the bishop and the resolution of the elders. He wrote of it to Beza, as of a thing for which he blessed the Lord, and in which

he knew that this great servant of the Lord would rejoice with him. We must not then draw any consequences from our churches against those of England; for in them the reformation having been commenced by the prelates and the bishops, we must not be astonished if the Episcopal government has always continued. And if there should be found persons so deeply in love with Presbyterian parity, (ισότης ἐκείνη) as speaks Isidore of Pelusium, to wish to oppose this ancient order, and to subvert it entirely, at the expense of the repose of the Church, they cannot fail to be blamed.”—*Vie de Du Bosc, Œuvres*, tom. viii. p. 21—25.

Beausobre, another learned Presbyterian divine, whose praise as a theologian is in all the churches, says:—

“It is said, and all antiquity incessantly repeats it, that the deacons in the Christian Church are the successors of the Levites, the pastors of the priests, and that, in fine, the bishops are the successors of the high priests.

“But it may be asked, were there also bishops distinguished from the presbyters in these times—in the apostolic times? This is the subject of great and obstinate contests, not only amongst the Protestants and Roman Catholics, but between the Protestant Churches and the Reformed Churches. This question is not a point now for my discussion; I will only say, that a Christian who loves the peace and union of the Church,

will never cause a schism for the difference of government; and if he does, he must answer for it before God. I will say, in the second place, that Episcopacy, having been established and accepted by the universal Church, it ought to be as much respected as we respect in states the governments established, although they may not have been the same in their origin and in the foundations of republicks. I will say, in the third place, that if, by the bishop, we understand the first, or the president of the college of elders or of presbyters, Episcopacy is as old as the Christian Church. I will say, in the fourth place, that if the bishops had not opposed the reformation with all their might, the reformers would never have attacked Episcopacy, although, by course of time, it had acquired an authority which certainly never emanated from Christ and his apostles: I will say more—it is this—that if the pontiffs of Rome had been content with being patriarchs of the West, and if they had not been the tyrants, the oppressors of TRUTH, and of those who made noble and holy efforts to draw her forth from the tomb in which she had been buried, never would the reformers have thought of shaking off the yoke of the Pope.”—*Beausobre. Serm. sur Rom. xii. ver. 7, 8.*

Such are the sentiments of the greatest, wisest, and best of men who ever graced the Presbyterian churches; and such quotations as these might be multiplied to a very great extent: but surely, to every candid mind, these must afford evidence

that Episcopacy did not arise, as some modern sciolists would tell us, only between the second and the fourth centuries. What! these men, scholars so profound as far to surpass the moderns who contradict them—these giants in intellect and literature, compared with whom most of our learned professors are mere pigmies—these men, having greater facilities of ascertaining facts, by living so much nearer to the early ages, and having books then in vogue, which are now lost, or only with extreme difficulty obtained—these men, who had as deep an interest at stake, and who would, if possible, have denounced Episcopacy as an imposture—these men, unable to find out that Episcopacy was not known till about the third century, nay, all contending that it existed in the very first age, and most of them, that it existed in the days of the apostles—these men mistaken, and the moderns only able to arrive at the truth!! “Credat Judæus Appella.”

The man, then, who, with these evidences before him, asserts that Episcopacy did not originate till between the second and fourth centuries, or who has the hardihood to assert that the first reformers of the Church of England were substantially Presbyterians, defames, and he knows that he defames; and whilst excess of charity may lead some pious persons to attribute the moral malady under which he labours to his head, there may perhaps be found some who think themselves not uncharitable in ascribing it to his heart.

LETTER V.

EPISCOPACY SUSTAINED BY THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

FROM examining the admissions of those who have been the abettors of an opposite system of Church government, and whose testimony is of no small moment, we may proceed to consult the records of the Fathers of the earliest ages, which have been carefully preserved, and handed down to us. These might be traced upwards through several centuries, but as the most wise and renowned of the Presbyterians do not attempt to dispute the existence of universal Episcopacy after the second age of the Church, and as there are none but who admit it as having so obtained in the third, or, at furthest, the fourth century, so it will only be necessary to refer to the writings of such as in the last mentioned periods, or previously, bear testimony upon this point. Here again the same difficulty occurs as on a former argument, viz. the multiplicity of evidence. It is hard to select and to refuse, when so many present important and equally strong testimony ;

but out of the mouth of two or three witnesses, says Scripture, shall every word "be established."

And to this species of proof (quotations from the Fathers, and their testimony upon the subject) no valid objections can possibly be raised by any reasonable being. To argue against the reception thereof, would be to argue against all history of whatever kind, since we are indebted for all our acquaintance with past events, to the records of those persons who witnessed them, and who were co-temporary with their occurrence. But who ever thought of rejecting such traditions? So to do, would be to set at nought all history, to brand all mankind as fools; it would be by one sweeping stroke to blot out, not only the memorials of all antiquity, but also to nullify revelation itself, which is a registration of facts, (every doctrine of Scripture being *a fact*, for the authenticity of which we are indebted to the testimony of these identical Fathers,) and thus to obliterate even Christianity itself. Any objection of this kind, if it were brought, would, by attempting to prove too much, prove nothing.

Neither can any reasonable objection be raised against the character of such witnesses. Where is the foul calumniator to be found, the image of him who is emphatically called "*the accuser of the brethren*," who would dare to impeach them of dishonesty? If they stated as fact, that which all in their day knew to be falsehood, refutation would have been easy, and, in the collision of parties, must certainly have taken place; besides, no

possible motive can be assigned why they should have attempted to deceive, but every reason can be shown why they should not have done so. Were they not men of good morals? of exalted piety? not only teachers of Christianity, but many of them her martyrs? men who "*loved not their lives even unto the death*" for the cause of Truth? To such men, then, every candid mind would listen, and none but he who should argue from his own evil disposition, would be disposed to dispute their testimony. If the records of a Xenophon, a Livy, a Tacitus, a Hume, a Clarendon, with multitudes of others, are considered as deserving of credence, and are received as authentic, surely those of the ministers of Christ, and especially his devoted martyrs, are entitled to the same reception. Besides, the very men who pretend to reject them, never fail, when they can, to avail themselves of their writings, if they think they find therein any thing that can subserve their own cause.

Now there are few things of which we cannot trace the origin. We have found out the source of the Nile; we can follow back to their commencement, the foundations of empires; we can ascertain the very first germ and nucleus of the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman monarchies; we can determine the period of the birth of every society; borne down by the current of revelation, we can perceive the origin of the Jewish Church, we can understand the time of the formation of man, and certify ourselves of the birth

of creation. We can in later times define when arose Presbyterianism, Congregationalism, Quakerism, Methodism, and a multitude of other "isms." But, in the midst of all these, according to most of its opponents, Episcopacy is an anomaly. Of late, however, some learned Presbyterians have delved in the dust and rubbish of past ages. One of them, doubtless highly gifted for the purpose, and delighted with his wonderful discoveries, exclaims triumphantly, *eureka, eureka*, (I have found it, I have found it.) Where? where? is the inquiry. Oh! it is somewhere between the third and fourth centuries. But where there? when did it appear? Alas! alas! it is so mercurial in its nature, that, just as he pounces upon it, it glides away from his touch, and, after all his vapouring and pedantry, he finds himself still remaining "in statu quo." He resembles the mariner, who, having lost his reckoning, sees, as he thinks, some hills at a distance, and cries, Land! land! but the clouds have deceived him, and, after long toiling and sailing, he finds himself as distant from it as ever, till the sun shines upon it, and it vanishes, the airy phantom dispersing beneath its beams.

But to the point—the testimony of the Fathers.

St. Jerome, who lived in the year of the Christian era 378, and who is adduced by the opponents of Episcopacy as furnishing them with the strongest arguments of this kind of testimony against it. St. Jerome says as follows:—

“ That we may know that the apostolick traditions were taken from the Old Testament, that which Aaron and his sons and the Levites were in the temple, let the bishops, presbyters, and deacons claim to themselves in the Church.”—*Epis. ad Evagrium.*

Again :

“ Ignatius, the third bishop of the Church of Antioch after the Apostle Peter, in the persecution under Trajan, was condemned to wild beasts. And when he came to Smyrna, where Polycarp, the disciple of John, was bishop, he wrote an epistle to the Ephesians, another to the Magnesians, a third to the Trallians, a fourth to the Romans. And when he was gone thence, he wrote to the Philadelphians, the Smyrneans, and, in particular, to Polycarp.”—*De Illus. Hom.*

Again :

“ The apostles were thy fathers because they begat thee ; but now that they have left the world, thou hast in their stead their sons the bishops.”—*Ad. Eccles.*

Again :

“ Without the bishop’s license neither presbyter or deacon has a right to baptize.”—*Dial. Adver. Luc. chap. iv.*

Again :

“ Be thou subject to thy bishop, (pontifici) and look upon him as the parent of thy soul.”—*Epis. ad Nepotanium.*

Writing also to Riparius concerning the conduct of Vigilantius, a refractory presbyter, he says :—

“ I wonder that the holy bishop in whose diocese this presbyter is said to be, should submit to his madness, and not break this useless vessel with his apostolick and iron rod.”—*Epis. ad Riparium.*

Again :

“ After that—one was chosen who was preferred to the rest, that a remedy might be found for schism, lest each one drawing to himself should break the Church of Christ. For at Alexandria, FROM MARK THE EVANGELIST even to Heraclas and Dionysius, bishops, the presbyters always named as bishop one chosen from themselves, and placed him in a higher grade.”

“ For what does a bishop, *ordination* excepted, which a presbyter may not do?”—*Epis. ad Evagrium.*

Once more :

“ It is the custom of the Church for the bishop to go and invoke the Holy Spirit, by imposition of hands on such as were baptized by presbyters and deacons, in villages and places remote from the mother church. Do you ask where this is written? In the Acts of the Apostles.”—*Idem.*

From these passages (and others of a like kind might be produced,) it is evident that Jerome maintained not only that Episcopacy existed in his day, but also that it was an apostolick institution. If he did not, he meant to deceive, and consequently he must have been a bad man.

Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, was born in the

year 333, and was co-temporary with Jerome. He was a man not only of great eloquence, but also of singular piety. In his Commentary upon the Epistle to Timothy, when speaking of his ordination to the episcopate, he thus writes:—

“Herein he shows also by what manner a bishop is ordained; for neither is it lawful or permissible that an inferior should ordain a superior, since no one can bestow that which he has not first received.”—*Comm. in Epis. ad Tim.*

Hilary, a Roman deacon, who in the year 353 was present at the Synod of Arles, and to whom several works are ascribed, thus writes in his Commentary on Timothy:—

“The bishop is chief; though every bishop is a presbyter, every presbyter is not a bishop.”—*1 Tim. iii.*

Again:

“Timothy and Titus were angels, (bishops) as taught in the Revelation of St. John.”—*Comm. 1 Cor. xi. 10.*

Optatus, bishop of Mela, in Africa, was co-temporary with the former; he writes:—

“The Church has her several members, bishops, presbyters, deacons, and the company of the faithful.”—*Contra Parmen. lib. 2.*

Cyprian was bishop of Carthage; he suffered martyrdom under the Emperor Valerian, in the year 258. He wrote, amongst many other works,

one entitled, "On the Power of the Presbytery when the Bishop is absent;" and another, "On the Order of Bishops and Presbyters." In another of his works he writes: "Our Lord, whose commands we ought to reverence and obey, being about to constitute the Episcopal honour and the frame of his Church, said to Peter, 'Thou art Peter,' &c. From thence the order of bishops and constitution of the Church does descend by the line of succession, through all times and ages, that the Church should be built upon the bishops. It is established by the divine law, that every act of the Church should be governed by the bishop." —*Epist. xxxiii. de Lapsis*, Edit. Oxon.

Again:

"Christ said to the apostles, and by that to all bishops, or governors of his Church, who succeed the apostles by vicarious ordination, and are in their stead—'He that heareth you, heareth me.'"

—*Epist. Florentio*, lxvi.

It would extend these letters far too widely to quote many other passages from this Father; one more shall suffice:—

"What danger ought we to fear from the displeasure of God, when some presbyters, neither mindful of the Gospel nor of their own station in the Church—neither regarding the future judgment of God, nor the bishop who is set over them, (which was never done under our predecessors)—with the contempt and neglect of the bishop, do arrogate all rule unto themselves!" —*Epist. xvi. p. 36. Presbyteris et Diaconitis*.

Origen, of Alexandria, was born in the year 185 or 189, and died at Tyre about the year 252: he was reckoned to be a prodigy of literature. In his Commentary upon Matthew, he names bishops, presbyters, and deacons as three distinct orders. "Such a bishop," says he, speaking of one who sought after vain-glory, "doth not desire a good work; and the same is to be said of presbyters and deacons." "The bishops and presbyters, who have the chief place among the people. The bishop is called Prince in the churches." Speaking of the irreligious clergy, he addresses them, "Whether bishops, presbyters, or deacons."---*Comm. in Matth.* p. 255.

Tertullian, another eminent Father, died in the year 220, in his book of the Prescriptions of Hereticks, he thus writes:---

"Let them produce the original of their churches, let them show the order of their bishops, that by their succession we may see whether their first bishop had any of the apostles, or apostolical men who did likewise persevere with the apostles, for his founder and predecessor; for thus the apostolical Churches do derive their succession; as the Church of Smyrna from Polycarp, whom John the apostle placed there; the Church of Rome from Clement, who was in like manner ordained by Peter; and so the other churches can produce those constituted in their bishopricks by the apostles."—C. 34.

Irenæus was bishop of Lyons, in France. He was a disciple of the martyr Polycarp, who was bishop of Smyrna. He lived about the year 167. He is highly eulogized by Mosheim, who represents some of his works as being amongst the most precious remains of ancient erudition. The following are extracts from the works so described:—

“We can reckon those bishops who have been constituted by the apostles and their successors all the way to our times; and if the apostles knew hidden mysteries, they would have certainly delivered them to those chiefly to whom they committed the churches themselves, and whom they left in the same places of government as themselves. We have the succession of bishops to whom the Apostolick Church in every place was committed.”—*Adver. Hæreticos*, l. iii. c. 3.

Again:

“The true knowledge is the doctrine of the apostles, and the ancient state of the Church throughout the whole world, and the character of the body of Christ, according to the succession of bishops, to whom they committed the Church, that is in every place, and which has descended even to us.”—*Adv. Hæret. lib. iv. c. 6.*

“Polycarp,” says Pictet, “who is believed to be the angel of the Church at Smyrna, mentioned Apoc. ii. c. suffered martyrdom at the age of 86; being, according to Pearson, the year N. S. 147. He wrote several letters, as we learn from Ire-

næus. There are some which have been published under his name, and which have been considered to be supposititious; but there is one which several admit as genuine, and which is addressed to the Philippians.”—*Œuvres Melées*, tom. iii. p. 5.

In this epistle Polycarp writes—

“The Epistles of Ignatius, which he wrote unto us, together with what others of his have come to our hands, we have sent to you according to your order, which are subjoined to this epistle: by which you may be greatly profited; for they treat of faith and patience, and of all things that pertain to edification in the Lord Jesus.”—*Epist. Phil.* § 9.

Ignatius was bishop of the Church at Antioch, in the year of our Lord 71. He suffered martyrdom in the year 107. He was instituted bishop of the Church at Antioch by the apostles, and considered himself, and all other Christian “bishops, as invested with their authority, and as succeeding them in their office;” as will appear from his letter.

That the shorter Epistles ascribed to him, and from which quotations will be made, were the genuine letters of this Father, is evident from—

The testimony of Polycarp, as before cited.

The testimony of Irenæus, who cites from Ignatius, as his authority, the following passage: “I am the corn of God: I shall be ground by the teeth of beasts, in order that I may become the

bread of Jesus Christ.”—*Adver. Hæret. lib. v. c. 26.*

The testimony of Origen, who, in his works upon the Canticles, cites him quoting this as his expression—“ My Love is crucified.”

The testimonies of Eusebius, Jerome, and others; but these are needless, as I may quote—

The testimony of Lardner, an English critick, who certainly was a low Arian, and whom the Arians claim as one of their party. In his “ Credibility of the Gospel History,” he says---“ I have carefully compared the two editions, and am very well satisfied, upon that comparison, that the larger are an interpolation of the smaller, and not the smaller an epitome or abridgment of the latter.” This is the testimony of one of the greatest scholars and acutest criticks of his day, a man whom every motive would have induced to reject them, if he deemed them spurious, but whom honesty would not allow so to do.

The testimony of Dr. Dwight, who, in his System of Theology, refers to them in support of infant baptism.

The testimony of Dr. Miller, yes, of that very Dr. Miller who, when writing against the Episcopalians, said, “ *that the shorter Epistles of Ignatius are unworthy of confidence as the genuine works of the Father whose name they bear, is the opinion of many of the ablest and best judges in the Protestant world.*” This same person, “ *Eheu, quantum mutatus ab illo !!*” in writing subsequently against the Unitarians, and wishing to urge the

sentiments of the same Father against them, says in words as follow: "*The great body of learned men consider the smaller Epistles of Ignatius as, in the main, the real works of the writer whose name they bear.*" Thus his real opinion has been wrung from him, if indeed such an opinion, given under such circumstances, be of any importance at all.

What then says Ignatius?

"Be subject unto your bishop, as to the Lord, and to the presbyters, as to the apostles of Christ; likewise the deacons, also being ministers of the mysteries of Christ, ought to please in all things. Without these, there is no Church of the elect: he is without, who does any thing without the bishop, and presbyters, and deacons, and such an one is defiled in his conscience."---*Epis. to the Trallians.*

"You ought not to despise the bishop for his youth, but to pay him all manner of reverence, according to the commandment of God the Father, and as I know your holy presbyters do."---*Epis. to the Magnesians.*

"I exhort you to partake of the one eucharist; for there is one body of the Lord Jesus, and one blood of his which was shed for us, and one cup, and one altar; so there is one bishop, with the presbytery and deacons, my fellow-servants."---*Epist. to the Philadelphians.*

These are only a few quotations from a large number of passages of like import in these Epistles, and if these do not evince that he believed

in a triple gradation of the ministry, and that such a gradation was of divine appointment, then language cannot possibly be the safe medium of conveying the ideas of one man to the mind of another.

Clement was bishop of Rome. He also suffered martyrdom. He is mentioned by St. Paul, Phil. iv. 3; and Origen says, "he was a disciple of St. Peter."---*Origen de Princip.* lib. ii. c. 3.

"He wrote," says Pictet, (*Œuvres Mêlées*, tom. iii. p. 2,) "an Epistle to the Corinthians, on occasion of the great schism which had taken place in that Church by those who, having received extraordinary gifts, rebelled against the ordinary pastor, to exhort them to peace, and to remain firm in the faith. It appears that the Corinthian Church had sent persons to the Church at Rome, to implore their assistance in this unhappy schism.---*Phorius in Bib. Cod.* 11; *Hieron. lib. de Vir. Illus. et alibi*; *Irenæus*, lib. iii. *Adv. Hæret.* c. 3."

"This letter has been highly esteemed, and, according to Eusebius, they were accustomed publicly to read it.---*Euseb.* lib. v. c. 16---38." Thus far Pictet.

In this letter we find him saying---"To the high priest his proper offices were appointed; the priests had their proper order, and the Levites their peculiar deaconship (*Διακονία*), and the laymen what was proper for laymen."---*Clem. Epist. Cor.* § 40.

Again:

“The apostles knew, by the Lord Jesus Christ, that contests would arise concerning the Episcopal name; and for this cause, having thereof perfect foreknowledge, they did ordain those whom we mentioned before, and moreover, did establish the constitution, that other approved men should succeed those who died in their office and ministry.”---*Idem*, § 44.

Thus have the testimonies of the Fathers been traced up to the very first persons who were ordained in the Church by the apostles themselves, and their evidence is altogether in support of Episcopacy. And is it possible that such men mistook the nature and constitution of the Church? Then who can now possibly understand it? Then how were the apostles deceived in the appointment of such men to the ministry? Then (who does not shudder at the thought?) how egregious the error of the Head of the Church, in leaving this matter to the apostles; and how inattentive was he to the interests of his kingdom, in permitting, even with his own servants, such a fundamental heresy, at so early a period, to obtain!

In addition to these testimonies, there is one fact, which, if duly weighed, must evolvè demonstration upon every unprejudiced mind. The Rev. Dr. Buchanan, in the volume published by him, in which he gives an account of his missionary travels, informs us, that in the very bosom of Asia he discovered, to his surprise and delight, a Syriac Christian Church, of whose existence, till then, he had but an imperfect knowledge; that this

Church was Episcopal in its government; that it traced up its bishops, in regular succession, to the apostolick age; that, in poverty and purity, it had maintained its faith in the seclusions of the wilderness, and that it had never submitted, in any way, to the heresies of Rome, having not even heard of them till some little time before, by the Jesuit missionaries; in fine, that its discipline was orderly, and its liturgy scriptural. He narrates part of a conversation which he held with one of their bishops, who wished to know something of the other Churches, besides that of the Church of England, which had separated from Rome.

“I mentioned,” says Dr. Buchanan, “that there was a kasheesha, or presbyter Church in our own kingdom, in which every kasheesha (presbyter) was equal to another. ‘And are there no shumshanas?’ (deacons in holy orders.) ‘None.’ ‘And what, is there nobody to overlook the kasheeshas?’ ‘Not one.’ ‘And who is the angel of their Churches?’ (alluding to the form of the seven Churches in Asia, Apoc. ii.) ‘They have none.’ ‘There must be something imperfect there,’ said he.”*

Thus, then, it was a matter of surprise to him,

* The above account is taken from an *English* copy of Dr. Buchanan's *Researches*. This fact is here mentioned, because the author has been informed that there was published in this country, some years since, an edition of the work, in which the chapter containing the conversation above quoted was entirely omitted. The cause of this omission was not explained. The Baltimore edition is a correct reprint of the English.

that a Church could exist without a bishop; he considered it as wanting marks of apostolicity. Such a fact amounts to demonstration of the opinion of the Fathers.

When an argument has been carried to a certain point of proof, all addition serves only to diminish its importance; it is like an attempt to bestow greater effulgence on the noon-day sun. To adduce, then, upon this point, further evidence, would be vain.

LETTER VI.

EPISCOPACY SUSTAINED BY SCRIPTURE.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

PERHAPS there is no passage of any writer that has been more frequently quoted of late years, and that meets with more general approbation, than that one sentence of Chillingworth—"the Bible, the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants;" since, great as may be the respect due unto the Fathers, and important as is their testimony, they are of authority far inferior to the inspired volume. To the Scriptures alone should we look, as the true touch-stone of all religious sentiments; they only are the infallible word, and whatever is not founded upon them, must be rejected, whilst it is at our peril to refuse what they teach or enjoin. He who will not bow before them, must be crushed beneath them. The great inquiry, then, with every serious Christian, will be, What says the word of God? He will follow the example of the Bereans, of whom it is recorded to their honour, that "*they searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*" He will say even of the Fathers—"To the law and to the testimony,

if they speak not according to them, it is because the truth is not in them."

Let us bring then Episcopacy to this test ; let us weigh it in the balances of the sanctuary ; let us apply this touch-stone both to Episcopacy and Presbytery, and we shall easily see which of them is the result of divine appointment.

Every person who examines the New Testament will perceive, that from amongst the number of his disciples, many of whom had been employed as the preachers of his word, our blessed Lord selected twelve persons, on whom was bestowed the title of apostles, whom he distinguished by some sort of pre-eminency over the others, investing them with peculiar powers, and committing to them the affairs of his Church. To them he solemnly and expressly confided, as the master to his stewards, " the keys of the Church," or, as he emphatically called her, " the reign [kingdom] of heaven ;" whilst, in consequence of this distinction, the Church is said by St. Paul to be "*built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone ;*" and St. John, in his Revelation, says of the New Jerusalem, "*The walls of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb,*" referring to the practice of architects, who, in laying the foundation-stone of some important edifice, were accustomed to engrave their names thereon.

That the apostles were an order of ministers superior to all their brethren, is so evident from

the whole tenour of the Scriptures, that any attempt to prove it would be needless; it is universally admitted; whilst several Presbyterian professors of theology, and amongst others Pictet, have laid down the following as requisite conditions of the apostleship :—

1st. That they should have seen a risen Saviour. 2d. That they should have been immediately called to the office by our Lord himself. 3d. That they should understand the Gospel by immediate revelation. 4th. That they should be infallible in their doctrine. 5th. That they should have the power of working miracles, and of bestowing the Holy Ghost by imposition of their hands. 6th. That they should have the power of inflicting bodily plagues, and even death, upon those who opposed their ministry. And, 7th. That they should have no particular residence, but superintend all the churches.—*See Pictet. Theol. Chret. tom. iii. p. 388.*

Besides the apostles, Scripture makes mention of other orders of ministers, who in their days were established in the Church of Christ. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, iv. 11, speaks of different gradations. He tells us that our “ Lord gave *apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, for the work of the ministry.*” In his Epistle to the Romans, xii. 6, 7, 8, he says, “ *Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophecy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let*

us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching: or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity: he that ruleth, with diligence: he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness."

There were then different grades of rank, and different charges sustained in the Church. Nor would it be difficult, were this the proper place for it, to define the precise nature of these charges, and to support such definitions by solid evidence. Over all these different ministers the apostles were invested with authority to rule. As they received their office immediately from Christ, they were clothed by him with singular honour, and were regarded by their fellow Christians with profound reverence. As they were inspired by the Holy Ghost, so their decrees and doctrines were infallible, issued forth with authority, and not to be resisted. Acts xv. 28; xvi. 4. As they alone had the power of giving, by imposition of hands, the Holy Ghost, so were they greater than the prophets, than even Moses himself; Moses had not this power. See Numb. xi. 17. Elijah had it not. 2 Kings ii. 9. John had it not. Matt. iii. 11. The evangelists, as such, had it not. See Acts xix. 1—6. As, in fine, upon them was the care of all the churches, so to their direction and government all were submissive; they exalted and degraded persons therein, they alone held the rod of discipline.

Such was their importance, that Pictet tells us, "The twelve apostles are called, by the Fathers,

the twelve patriarchs of the new people, the twelve fountains of Elim, which furnished water to the second Israel of God, the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem, the twelve stars of the Church's crown, the twelve angels who stand at the gates of the Holy City."—*Pictet. Theol. Chret.* tom. ii. p. 388.

In his exposition upon Ephesians iii. 2. the learned Du Bosc thus speaks :—

“ In fact, it was an incomparable grace, the highest and most eminent of all graces, (the apostleship,) since it raised a man to the highest degree of perfection, of dignity, and of power to which a man could ascend in this life; for what was an apostle but a living and speaking image of Jesus Christ upon earth---an universal pastor, clothed with all the authority of the great and supreme Pastor of souls? according to this express language, which he addressed to his twelve first disciples, ‘*As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you,*’ John xx. 21; and, ‘*I dispoñe unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath dispoñed it unto me,*’* Luke xxii. 29---comparing their authority to his own; so that an apostle was a second Jesus Christ in the world. ‘If then the Lord is called *the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person,*’ we may say, in an honest sense, the gradations and proportions being ob-

* It is proper here to remark, that in the common translation of the English Bible, the language is, “I give unto you, &c.” I have here followed the literal rendering of the French version; and would add, that it is conformable also to the Scotch rendering.

served, that the apostles were the brightness of the glory of the Son, and the sensible and animate image (*caractère sensible et animée*,) of his blessed person. What grace then! what inexpressible grace, to a mortal and sinful man, ‘to be elevated to the apostleship!’”—*Œuvres de Du Bosc*, tom. vii. p. 340, 341.

“The apostles were ecumenical pastors, each one of whom regarded the world as his parish and his diocese.”—*Idem*, p. 346.

In perfect accordance with these representations, the apostles exercised a power very different from that of the ordinary pastors; they were the source of authority, as the texts already quoted evince. “They confirmed,” as appears, Acts xix. 6; “they alone ordained,” 2 Tim. i. 6; “none others having the power to confer the Holy Ghost;” in fine, “they held the rod of universal discipline,” Acts v. 9, 10; xiii. 11; 1 Cor. v. 4, 5; 1 Tim. i. 20.

Thus then, when Jesus Christ our Lord set up his Church, he instituted different grades of the ministry, over which he appointed the apostles as universal bishops. Now, then, does Scripture ever tell us of any alteration having taken place, or as having been designed in this mode of Church government? If our Lord had not regarded it as the best constitution for his Church, why establish, at the very outset, different orders? and why raise these twelve apostles to a station superior to the seventy preaching disciples, when he could have as easily inspired and invested with

similar powers, not only the seventy, but also the *five hundred brethren* by whom *he was seen at once*; and thus, without needless difficulties, have every where founded Presbyterian or Congregational churches, if such were the form he approved? Why was this difference in rank made, unless for the very purpose of settling a ministry consisting of different orders and degrees? or if this were not his intention, why has not he, or why have not his apostles told us that such a mode of Church government was only provisional and temporary? And why did they not lay down rules for a better? Besides, our blessed Lord well knew that, finding such a government in his Church, and seeing its accordance with the divinely instituted priesthood of the temple, men would necessarily consider the one as the substitute of the other, unless some express provision or direction were made to undeceive them. Yet, instead of any such thing being done, every thing in the New Testament tends to help on the delusion in favour of Episcopacy, if indeed a delusion it be.

Most readily is it admitted, that the apostles were invested with extraordinary endowments, such as inspiration, ability to work miracles, and infallibility in doctrine, to which none can now lay any claim. But the two former, inspiration and the power of working miracles, were continued even for some time after the apostles' days, till the establishment of Christianity rendered them no longer necessary; whilst the apostles

having concluded and consummated the canon of Scripture, infallibility became unnecessary also. But was the government of the Church unnecessary? Surely, if, in the days when on many churches extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit were poured out---if in those days it was requisite that a superior order of persons should exist, in whose hands authority should be placed for the government of such churches, such an authority and government would be far more requisite in subsequent periods; and it was natural either that the apostles should consider their own example as the rule which their successors in the ministry should follow, or that they should admonish them that their government was intended only for a season, and that, after their departure, another order of things must take place.

Now the latter they have nowhere done; nowhere have they even intimated that a parity was to obtain. It is a received maxim, that where no precept to the contrary exists, the conduct of inspired men, who were exemplars of piety, stands in the place of precept; what then could be more natural than that their conduct in the government of the Church should be imitated by their successors? But upon this point we have positive command—"Be ye followers of me," says St. Paul, "as I am of Christ." "*Keep the ordinances, as I delivered them unto you.*" 1 Cor. xi. 1, 2. "*But thou,*" says he to Timothy, "*hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose,*" &c. "*Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast*

been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." 2 Tim. iii. 10, 14. "*The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*" 2 Tim. ii. 2.

Moses was an extraordinary personage; no other was like him in all the Jewish dispensation; but when he was about to depart this life, he invested another, though far his inferior, with the office he held. Aaron being about to die, was stripped of his garments in Mount Hor, and Eleazar, his son, was invested with them in his stead. So in like manner the apostles provided for the Church against the time of their departure, by investing with their offices persons who were indeed inferior to themselves, but who succeeded them in those functions which were necessary for the Church. That Timothy and Titus were thus appointed in the place of the apostle St. Paul, and that they were invested with a superiority over others, Scripture abundantly shows.

Here it may be observed, that it is not for the term BISHOP that the contest is so much maintained, as for the office to which that term is applied; not so much for the name, as for the thing which it signifies. It is admitted, that the titles of bishop, presbyter, and elder, were, in Scripture, different titles of the same person. "They were called," says Pictet, "bishops, because they had the oversight of the flock; elders or presbyters, either because of their age, or their gravity, or their dignity. They were called

pastors," says he, "because they fed the flock of Christ the Lord."—*Theo. Chret.* 2 tom. p. 396. But the question is, whether all these were upon a parity; none disputes their subjection to the apostles. Were there any that succeeded the apostles in their office of government? Who were overseers of the ordinary pastors or presbyters? Who exercised the distinct and peculiar office of those designated bishops? And to whom, in consequence, by way of distinction, the term Bishop, as having the oversight of others, was given? This, then, is the question to which we must seek a scriptural solution.

Now upon this point the Scriptures are so plain, that "*he who runs may read*;" and in them we find St. Paul committing to Timothy and Titus the very same Episcopal powers with which he himself was invested, and in consequence these two bishops exercising them. Upon this point the late Dr. Mason says,—“that Timothy and Titus were superior to presbyters. Who denies it? What! do you allow that they severally had the power of ordaining to the ministry by their sole authority? Yes, we do. That they had authority to inquire into the doctrines taught by the presbyters? Yes. To coerce the unruly? Yes. To expel the heretical? Yes—we never thought of disputing it. Timothy and Titus could do all these things, without being diocesan bishops; an apostle could do them in virtue of his apostolic office; and, evangelist as Timothy, and consequently Titus, undoubtedly was, could do them,

in consequence of his office as an evangelist, and yet be very unlike a diocesan bishop." Thus far Dr. Mason.

He admits that the same powers, powers which were superior to those of the presbyters, and similar to those of the apostles, were vested in Timothy and Titus; but then he attributes this to their office as evangelists. But already it has been shown that this power did not belong to mere evangelists. What then was this office? The term signifies, as Dr. Campbell has shown, (*Prel. Diss.* p. 203)---“ the first preacher of glad tidings unto a particular people.” “ It signifies,” says Jean Dail  , (already quoted,) “ every man who evangelizes, that is to say, who announces or preaches the Gospel, of whatever order he may be.” This definition is generally admitted, and is therefore applied by Congregationalists to the missionary who, in *any new* place, first preaches the Gospel. But Timothy, in this respect, to whomsoever else he might have been an evangelist, was not so to the Ephesians, as any reader of the Acts of the Apostles will easily perceive; nor as an evangelist merely, but as a bishop, or overseer of the flock---(who, when, to use the words of Grotius, they resided “ in one place, beholding a plentiful harvest, they believed it should be cherished by their presence, presided in the presbytery, they performed the office of bishops”)---as a bishop, at Ephesus, had he the powers now contended for.

Dr. Mason was utterly wrong in supposing that,

as an evangelist, he had these powers. Philip was an evangelist, but, as such, he could not confer the gift of the Holy Ghost, or confirm, Acts viii. 5, 6, 7. Apollos is enumerated by Jean Daillè amongst the evangelists. "Such," says he, "were Timothy, Crescens, Titus, Apollos, and many others, of whom the apostle makes mention here and there in his Epistles." *Serm. xxx. sur 2 Tim.* But if Apollos could have confirmed believers, why did he wait for St. Paul to do it? Acts xix. 6. Surely, then, as an evangelist, he had not this power; no more had Timothy, as such; it was only when constituted a diocesan, as the successor whom Paul had ordained to this office, that Timothy or Titus possessed the powers already referred to.

We have, then, from the Scriptures, an account of the immediate successors of the apostles exercising, like them, authority in the Church, and, as the representatives of the apostles, maintaining a supreme government; and as here the canon of Scripture terminates, and no account of subsequent events is given us in Scripture, we have irrefragable evidence that this was the government instituted by the apostles. At this very point the Fathers take up the thread of history, and they afford to the fact confirmation.

That persons invested with such office as Timothy and Titus had alone the power of ordaining, and that the presbyters had not, is equally plain from Scripture. St. Paul enjoins upon Timothy and Titus "*to ordain elders in every city;*"

but why should they be charged to ordain, if the presbyters already in those cities had power so to do? Paul enjoins Timothy to "*lay hands suddenly on no man,*" words which imply his exclusive right to ordain. He invests him, as is evident from his Epistle, with authority to order the mode of the divine service, the rules of Christian discipline, the correction of heresies, the excommunication of the disorderly—with the keys of the Church; he charges him in his turn to commit them to faithful men; and in conclusion, he solemnly thus addresses him:—" *I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:*" so that this charge extended until the second advent of the Saviour, and must therefore relate to his successors as well as to himself. The man who can see in this any sanction for Presbyterian parity, must have a mind so peculiarly constituted as to be able to reconcile any difficulties whatever.

The following facts, then, appear from the record of sacred Scripture:—1. That there were already many elders, presbyters, or pastors in the Church at Ephesus, when Timothy was, by the apostle St. Paul, appointed to be their superintendent. Acts xx. 17: "*And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the Church.*"—2. That in his charge to them, St. Paul admonished them "*to take heed to them-*

selves;" "to take heed to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers;" "to feed the Church of God;" and to "watch" against the men who should "arise, speaking perverse things." This was the sum of the charge addressed to them by the apostle; not a word did he utter to them which would give the most distant idea of their having any right to ordain, or to bear the rod of discipline.---3. That over these elders a pre-eminency was assigned to Timothy. He was to govern them: "Observe these things, without preferring one before another." He was to sit as judge over them in all matters of difference: "Against an elder receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses." He was to hold and exercise the rod of discipline: "Them that sin, rebuke before all." He was to be judge of the qualifications of the candidates for the ministry: "Lay hands suddenly on no man." He was to ordain to the office of the ministry: "The things which thou hast heard of me, commit thou to faithful men."---4. That this pre-eminence in the Ephesian Church, and superintendence of its government, was vested *solely* and *personally* in Timothy: not a syllable is said, not a hint the most distant given, of his having any colleagues or associates in this office of government; the personal pronoun *thou*, or *thee*, is invariably used—"I charge THEE"---"that THOU observe these things"---"that THOU mayest know how THOU oughtest to behave THYSELF in the house of God," &c.---5. That Timothy was a young man, far

younger than many of those who were the elders (presbyter bishops) in the Church of Ephesus: "*Let no man despise thy youth.*"

Now, with these facts before us, can we possibly conceive of any thing like parity being the primitive order of Church government? It is admitted on every side, that St. Paul was a wise man; but if any thing like Presbyterian parity was the order of his day, nothing can be conceived more unwise than this very charge of the apostle, nothing more calculated to awaken the jealousy of the presbyters of the Ephesian Church. It was, in fact, to throw down the apple of discord into the midst of them. To give a young man so much authority---to delegate to him a supremacy over his seniors---to make him the definitive judge in all their controversies---to appoint him alone to rebuke, ordain, to charge and watch over the other clergy---not to mention them in any way as associated with him---could any thing, upon the principle of parity, be more unwise, unjust, or dangerous, both to the interests of the Church or the humility of Timothy? But, upon the principles of Episcopacy, all is wise and consistent; nor can any other interpretation be given than the Episcopal, of this point, which will not reflect upon the wisdom and consistency of St. Paul.

In like manner, the powers given to Titus at Crete, distinguish him from all the presbyters of that Church; which can alone be understood by his investiture with the episcopate, or the apostolick succession.

Hence it is that Timothy is in sacred Scripture entitled an apostle, and by St. Paul himself. See 1 Thess. i. 1: "*Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the Church of the Thessalonians;*" and ii. 6: "*Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when WE might have been burdensome as APOSTLES of Christ.*" In this passage both Silvanus and Timothy are distinguished by the same title as St. Paul himself.

Whilst, then, it was necessary that the first twelve apostles should be chosen to that office and invested therewith by the Lord himself, yet their successors (and successors they had) were to be appointed by the apostles, as to their wisdom might seem most fitting; hence the very first act almost of the apostolick college, was the investiture of Matthias with that office---"*and he was numbered with the apostles.*" St. James, the bishop of Jerusalem, was not of the twelve, yet St. Paul calls him an apostle, Gal. i. 19: "*But other of the apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother.*" In like manner, Barnabas, Silvanus, Junius, and Andronicus, Epaphroditus, Titus, and others, have these appellations also bestowed upon them in the sacred Scriptures, although they were not of the twelve; and that they were invested by the other apostles with this office, is a clear induction from the language of St. Paul, who, speaking of himself, in opposition to them, as being invested with the office by our Lord in person, says, Gal. i. 1: "*Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ,*

and God the Father.)" Thus, then, the apostles ordained others into their ministry; and very remarkable is the language of Cruden, a Presbyterian, in his Concordance: "Apostleship," he says, "signifies the office of the apostles, which was to preach the Gospel, baptize, work miracles, plant and confirm the churches, and ordain ministers. See Matt. xxviii. 19; x. 1; Acts xiv. 23; 1 Cor. iii. 6."

Further, we nowhere find in Scripture the presbyters possessing any power to ordain, nay, the Scriptures imply the very reverse. There are indeed two cases stated in opposition to this, each of which seems plausible, but each of which, when examined, proves not to bear upon the point.

The first of these is the ordination, as it has been termed, of Timothy. St. Paul says unto him, "*Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*" Now, not to say any thing of the construction of which these words are capable, and which, as before shown, Calvin gives to the word translated "*presbytery*," referring to the OFFICE to which Timothy was designated, and not to the persons by whom he was so designated, St. Paul himself sets the matter at rest, in his second Epistle, by saying it was "*by the laying on of my hands.*" Jean Daillè, already quoted, says of this designation, that what the presbyters did, they did "*by their voice and their consent*;" but that "Paul did it as their chief and

their *principal*, by *his prayer* and *his benediction*, and by the laying on of *his hands*." But if even the presbyters aided, why may not the presbytery be interpreted of the apostolick presbyters or elders, with St. Paul at their head? At all events, it is allowed by the best writers on the side of presbytery, that the hands of St. Paul only were imposed: besides, they admit that the gift of the Holy Ghost was peculiar to the apostles; and by the imposition of the apostle this was now conferred. It necessarily follows, that by St. Paul alone was he ordained, and no argument can be derived thence for Presbyterian ordination.

The second case referred to, is that which is mentioned in Acts xiii. 2. But will any one contend that this was the ordination of Paul and Barnabas to the apostleship? Was it not necessary, according to Pictet and others, that the apostles should derive their office immediately from the Saviour? Does not St. Paul repeatedly assert that he was not indebted to any man for his office? For instance, in his Epistle to the Galatians, he says, "*Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.*") The case referred to was not then his ordination to the apostleship, but the designation of him and Barnabas to a special mission; of which it is afterward recorded that "*they finished their ministry.*"

Presbyterial ordination, then, has no sanction in Scripture; and the testimony of the first Fathers evince that it was unknown to them. Further, if

the primitive Church government was Presbyterial, (which was not the case,) it must have differed from that which now passes under the name of it; the Presbyterians having foisted a new office into the Church of Christ, which they call "lay," or "ruling elders." Now these men they ordain, but, most anomalously, they never allow them to ordain others, or to impose *their* hands upon the ministry in ordination. Not only do Episcopalians contend that Scripture exhibits no warrant for such a class of officers, but by far the largest number of Presbyterians allow the same. To mention the names of such persons is needless, as, in some other works upon the subject, this has been already done. But even Pictet, their favourite theologian, says, "The institution of them is not found in Scripture, as that of deacons; for when *elders* are spoken of in Scripture, it is clear we must understand the word of *pastors*. It is true, that, in the fifth chapter of the first of Timothy, it seems as if elders were spoken of who did not labour in the preaching of the word: '*Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in word and doctrine.*' But when we carefully examine this passage, we find that it is of *pastors* the word is used; for it is spoken of elders who preside; since the Greek word marks a *presidency* which belongs only to pastors, whom the Fathers often designate by this name. But it appears by this passage, that when there were many pastors in a church,

and that some were more proper for preaching than others, there were given to them different employments. If there be any passage in which it might be supposed that mention was made of these elders, (lay-elders,) it is in the twelfth of the first of Corinthians, twenty-eighth verse, where he speaks of GOVERNMENTS; but we must confess that nothing can be decided therefrom.”—*Theol. Chret.* tom. ii. p. 421.

Such is the honest avowal of this great Geneva professor, in which the largest number by far of the Presbyterian Church agree with him. If, then, there were no lay-elders in the Church, the apostle must refer to those presbyters who were pre-eminently industrious in their office; not only engaged in governing the Church, but, at the same time, in publicly preaching the word. This is certainly the true interpretation of the passage, and is perfectly analogous with other parts of Scripture.

One more text is cited in support of ruling lay-elders; it is Romans xiii. 8. “*He that ruleth with diligence.*” That this text does not refer to lay-elders, will appear by the following quotation from Beausobre: “It may be supposed that here he speaks of the bishop, or of the presbyters; and some interpreters think so. The apostle says, in the fifth chapter of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, twelfth and thirteenth verses: ‘*And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord; and to*

*esteem them very highly for their ministry's sake."**

And in the first Epistle to Timothy, v. 17, 18:

' Give double honour, for they are worthy of it, to the presbyters who govern well.' Those who pre-

side, are universally those who are called the presbyters or elders, and who compose the ecclesiastick senate, whether they may preach the Gospel or have some superior ministry."—*Beausobre, Serm. xviii. sur les Rom.*

The office of lay-elders was then unknown in the apostles' days. It is not sanctioned by Scripture; consequently a Church which has them, is not formed upon the platform laid down in the word of God.

That the term *elders*, designated a ministerial or clerical office, appears from the apostles calling themselves elders, as well as presbyters and deacons; for as the apostolick office is the source of, and includes every other, so, to express their humility, to convince men that they did not wish to assume too great state, or to "*Lord it over God's heritage*," the apostles, by way of condescension, and in imitation of their blessed Master, designated themselves by the inferior titles of their office.

Upon this subject Du Bosc says:—

" But remark here the extreme humility of St. Paul, and the perfect modesty he evinces in this passage. (Eph. iii. 7, 8.) He was an apostle, that is to say, exalted to the highest and most

* The author has in this, as in other quotations from French authors, given the literal translation of their Bible citations.

eminent of all charges, to the most sublime degree to which any one has ever ascended upon earth. For an apostle was a living image of the eternal Son of God, as we have already shown to you. He possessed his authority, his infallibility, his power. He was a man so much above men, that he appeared to be a second Jesus Christ in the world, in whatever related to the instruction of the Church. Nevertheless, here you see him representing himself as a simple servant. 'God,' says he, 'hath made me a minister of his Gospel;' for the term *minister*, means properly a servant. Still further; in the New Testament it relates to the very least of all the sacred services; for it is that of deaconship which has been attributed to those who have the care of the alms, of the charities, and of the assistance of the poor; so that St. Paul, according to the Greek language, says here that God has made him the DEACON of the Gospel. It is thus that the least titles suffice great personages for to speak of themselves, of their employments, and of their virtues. The greater they are in fact, the more do they aim to appear little in words, that in *this point they may resemble the stars*, of which the most vast and the most ample appear the least to our eyes, because of their prodigious elevation in the firmament. But especially is this modesty necessary and suitable for pastors, who are the successors and disciples of him who called himself '*lowly of heart*;' who protested that his '*kingdom was not of this world*;' who '*had neither form nor comeliness*,' nor

any thing exterior, '*that we should desire him;*' and who appeared as '*a worm,*' rather than '*a man,*' upon earth; he took only the abject form of a slave and of a servant, and therefore it is, those who followed him could not do better than to take the name and title of it."—*Œuvres de Du Bosc*, tom. v. p. 363, 364.

Many other portions of sacred writ besides those referred to, might be adduced in further confirmation. But this is needless, as they have been so well set forth, and the arguments thereon so ably defended, by Dr. Bowden and Dr. Cooke, in their respective works upon the subject.

There is, nevertheless, one more proof from the divine word, which deserves a very deep and serious consideration. It is the mode of our blessed Lord's address in each of his Epistles to the seven bishops of the Asiatic Churches, by St. John. After informing this beloved disciple that "*the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches,*" and that "*the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches,*" he directed his apostle to write seven Epistles, and to superscribe each of these Epistles to the angel of his several church.

It is truly astonishing to what miserable expedients of shifting and evasion some men who are opposed to the episcopate have been driven, in order to get rid of the argument upon this subject, —to see how men of fine talent and admirable powers of reasoning have been compelled to stoop to sophistry and manœuvre, which they

otherwise would have treated with scorn, in order that they might support a favourite system. What must, for instance, be the desperation of such an one, who would contend that the star, or the angel, or image of a single person, is not to be interpreted in the singular but the plural number ; that it is not to be considered individually, but collectively ; that each star and each angel is to be regarded, not as the emblem of him who presides in the Church, but of the whole Presbytery, that is, both of the clergymen and laymen who compose it ? Now such an interpretation would render the figure incorrect and unseemly ; there would be no propriety in it ; it would be quite "*outrè*." If a company of angels, or a constellation of stars, had been employed, such an image might be adapted to set forth a plurality of ministers : as it now stands, to make it signify a presbytery, is to put it on the rack, to subject it to the torture, and thus to wring from it by distortion, a meaning utterly foreign to its import.

Again, it is utterly contrary to the analogy of Scripture ; angels and stars, as will be hereafter shown, are in the sacred volume employed to typify the Gospel ministry, but never is a single angel or star employed to signify a collection or plurality of ministers.

Further, if the stars do represent the presbytery, in which are now included lay-elders, it would be incorrect, as they (the lay-elders) are never not only not represented as stars, but, as already has been shown, never in Scripture once spoken of.

In fine, if these figures do not refer to the bishops of the Church, it seems as if they were designed for the very purpose of misleading us. Our blessed Lord foreknew what contests upon the subject of Episcopacy would take place in his Church, yet, instead of employing language or figures that would guard against it, he here uses such as must infallibly carry with them to the mind, the idea of a presidency and primacy in each of the seven churches.

Neither can the terms relate, as Beza, Campbell, and others contend, to the moderator of Presbytery, since his relation as such to the Church is not official, gives him no right of distinction, and is only temporary, since he exercises no authority or discipline over his brethren, but is only the organ of *their* voice; nor is he, as moderator, an angel, (that is, a messenger from God,) having no such employment to them, but is, in fact, only the momentary servant of the assembled Presbytery.

Other interpretations are given of this subject by the learned Presbyterians of the old Geneva school, most of whom consider the star and angel of each Church as relating to its one president. The epistle, they say, is addressed to the pastor of the church, thus:—

Henri Chatelain, pastor of the French refugees at Amsterdam, says:—"It was to the angel of the church at Laodicea, that is to say, to the pastor of this church, and in his person to all the flock of which he was the head, that Jesus Christ

sent this admonition—‘ *Behold I stand, &c.* ’ ”—*Serm. sur Apoc. iii. 20, tom. ii.*

Jossue le Vasseur, professor of theology at Sedan in 1660, says :—“ It is this, you see,” (God promising eternal life and glory after his Church’s afflictions,) “ that he practices with regard to the pastor of the Church at Smyrna, in these words which we have read to you, exhorting him to perseverance in the profession of the truth, and in the practice of holiness ; and in his person all the members of the Church of God saying, ‘ *Be thou faithful unto death, &c.* ’ ”—*Serm. sur Apoc. ii. 10.*

Louis le Blanc, also professor of theology in the same college, and at the same time, (1660,) says :—“ Especially this is the complaint which Jesus Christ brings by the apostle John against the pastor of the Church of Ephesus, in saying, ‘ *Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee.* ’ ”—*Serm. sur Apoc. ii. 5, p. 6.*

Again, he says :—“ The Lord who had appeared unto John in a magnificent manner, and all resplendent with glory, and who commanded him to write in his name to the Churches of Asia, to admonish them of the things which his wisdom deemed necessary, addresses himself here particularly to the angel, that is, *to the pastor and ruler (conducteur) of the Church at Ephesus*, and in his person to all who were under his government ; and, amongst other things, he says—

‘Remember from whence thou art fallen, &c.’—
L. Le Blanc, Serm. sur Apoc. ii. 4, 5, p. 7, 8.

Jean Daillè says:—“These are the words of our Master, of Jesus Christ, the all good and all powerful Lord of all our Churches, which he has redeemed by his blood, which he illumines by his light, which he conducts by his providence, watching them and being assiduous in the midst of them, which he chastens also with his paternal rod, dispensing to them with a divine wisdom the judgments both of his clemency and truth, according as is most suitable for his glory and for their salvation. This great Pastor of his mystic sheepfolds, after having visited seven of them, which he had in Asia, having observed exactly what was to be found in them of good and evil, manifested himself to his servant John, and wished that he should write seven epistles in his name to the seven churches.”—“The first of these epistles was addressed, by his order, to the Church at Ephesus, *under the name of its angel, that is to say, of the pastor who had the charge of it.*”—*Serm. sur Apoc. ii. 5, p. 530.*

Again:

“But what, in fine, is the penalty with which he menaces the *pastor* of Ephesus and his flock? It is—‘*I will take away the candlestick out of his place.*’ St. John has already illustrated this enigma in the first chapter of his Revelation, where having said that he saw ‘*seven golden candlesticks,*’ he immediately adds, that the Lord expressly in-

structed him in the signification of this vision, teaching him that the seven candlesticks were the seven churches.”—*Idem*, p. 535.

Further, in another sermon, the same author says:—“ He dictated these words formerly to his servant John, who should write them in his name, and in his behalf, to the Church at Sardis, one of the seven Asiatic churches whom he honoured with his Epistles. For although, in the inscription of these divine letters, *the pastor alone is named who governed each of these churches*, nevertheless it is evident that they were written for the entire body of the flock, that is, for the people and their rulers (*conducteurs*) conjointly.”—*Serm. sur Apoc. iii. 1—3*, p. 665, 666.

Du Bosc, in his sermon on lukewarmness, says:—“ In these virtues, mediocrity is criminal, moderation is vicious. You see a formal proof thereof in our text, in which the eternal Son of God, addressing himself to the Christian people of Laodicea *in the person of its pastor*, complains that he is ‘*neither cold nor hot.*’ ”—*Du Bosc, Serm. sur les Tiedes*, tom. iv. p. 113.

Pictet says:—“ There was one pastor who presided in their assemblies: on this account it is that he is called ‘*the Angel of the Church,*’ Apoc. ii. &c. The Jews gave the title of Angel to their HIGH PRIEST: they gave also the name of Angel to the ruler of the synagogue.”—Tom. ii. p. 396.

Jacques Saurin, pastor at the Hague, in his discourse on the decay of piety, says:—"He who speaks in our text to the *angel*, that is to say, to the *bishop* of Ephesus, (*eveque*,) and in his person to all the Church of that city, is Jesus Christ."—*Serm. sur Apoc. ii. 4, 5.*

Easy were it to multiply similar quotations from Presbyterian writers, but those already produced demonstrate that the oldest Presbyterian professors never once dreamed of considering the angel as the type of the presbyters, but of the *presiding* pastor; or, if such a thought entered their minds, they discarded it as incongruous and untenable; nor would such an interpretation have ever been introduced, but from the desperateness of the cause.

In fine, Blondel, the greatest and most powerful defender of Presbytery, "acknowledges that the angels of the seven churches were so many individuals, to whom, as their exarchs or governors, the actions of the Church, whether glorious or infamous, are imputed."---*Bowden's Letters*, second series, let. xi. p. 127.

But then Blondel, with others, contends that the exarch was the moderator of Presbytery, a sentiment already evinced to be perfectly erroneous; in addition to which, when these Revelations were written, there was certainly a bishop who succeeded Timothy in his diocese. Ignatius informs us, that when he wrote his Epistle, viz. twelve years after the return of St. John from

Patmos, Onesimus was bishop of Ephesus. With every candid mind, this would put the question beyond a doubt. "Ex uno disce omnes."

Perhaps some further light may be shed upon the subject, by examining the scriptural import and application of the terms *candlestick*, *star*, and *angel*.

As we are creatures of sense, and as we, therefore, derive all our ideas from the material or visible objects by which we are surrounded; so can we form no conceptions of spiritual or heavenly things, but through the media of those which are sensible. Hence God, in compassion to us, has been pleased, in all his dispensations, to teach us moral and spiritual truths by figures, or by ideas, borrowed from the objects with which our senses are conversant. The whole world itself was a type of the higher worlds of creation. Eden, the first abode of man, was filled with hieroglyphics, in which every creature presented, to the first of mankind, a picture of correspondent heavenly things. The same was the case with the tabernacle and temple, all of whose divine institutions were types or images of "the world to come." God has followed the same mode of instruction in his word: he has employed not only the productions of nature, and the employments of men, and the offices of peculiar persons, but also the very productions of human skill and art, to lead up the minds of believers to the contemplation of spiritual objects. Thus the candlesticks, the stars, and the angels were symbols of correspondent objects in his Church.

In Exodus xxv. 31, 32, we have an account of the candlestick of gold which Moses made by the command of God, upon whose stock and branches were placed seven immoveable lamps, which *the priests were to keep constantly lighted and supplied with oil*, and which were placed in the holy place, or second court of the tabernacle. This sevenfold golden candlestick was considered by the faithful amongst the Jews, (and our Lord himself has confirmed the truth of their sentiment,) as the representation of the Church. Its lamps being seven in number, which the Jews, and others after them, have called "THE NUMBER OF PERFECTION," intimated the sevenfold or various and perfect operations of the enlightening Spirit of God. Its light being kindled by the priests, who derived it from the sacred fire on the altar, intimated the instruction imparted to the Church by a ministry divinely constituted, and emanating from that atonement which is the great source as well as object of knowledge to the Church. Its oil, with which it was continually supplied, taught them both the nature and communication of that grace which keeps alive the Christian faith, "*the unction of the Holy One, which teacheth all things.*" It was then an emblem of the Church, of which, to intimate his perpetual presence with it, the Saviour represented himself as "*walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks.*"

The candlestick differs in its type from the stars: the one is the emblem of the Church, the other the symbol of its ministry.

Stars are the most luminous and brilliant objects in nature, whilst placed in the heavens, where they may be seen, and whence they shed their influences; they are universally admired and celebrated; they are images employed in all poetic songs; they serve as lamps to enlighten us during the absence of the sun—as rulers to govern the seasons—as light-houses to direct the toil-worn, tempest-tossed mariner---whilst, beside their visible rays, they emit secret influences upon all below. Hence mankind, when they forsook the worship of the true God, made them the objects of their adoration, and considered them as regulating their destinies. To counteract this idolatry, Jehovah not only expressly forbade it in his word, but employed these heavenly bodies as types or figures of corresponding objects in his kingdom. Thus Christ Jesus our Lord is called a star; his ministers likewise are so designated; but never is the Church represented by a star. If the Saviour be figured forth to us as the Sun of Righteousness, the Church is represented by the moon---shining during the darkness of the night---deriving from the sun her splendour---ever waxing or waning---her disk disfigured with spots: she “*looks forth fair as the moon;*” but no where is she figured forth by the stars.

“Pastors or ministers,” says Cruden in his Concordance, “of the Gospel, who ought to shine like stars in respect of the brightness and purity of their lives and doctrines, are called stars.”

“In fact,” says Du Bosc, “the heralds of Christ are living and animated stars, who distribute in the Church the light of truth—who pierce the darkness of the night of the age, and the obscurity of error and ignorance—who enlighten and console the faithful during the absence of their Sun, that is to say, during the absence of that Saviour who resides, hidden from them, far above the heavens; and it is by the salutary force of their influences that God quickens souls, and renders them fertile in good works.”—*Œuvres de Du Bosc*, tom. iv. p. 747.

But the stars are ruling powers in nature—this is not only a commonly received idea, but founded in fact; the Scriptures tell us that “*they RULE over the day and over the night.*” If, then, the image be correct, they can only typify those objects which rule also, though in another hemisphere. This correct correspondence of the image with the object it represents, appears in the whole of Scripture. We may challenge a single passage to be produced, in which they are figuratively used, but they refer either to temporal or spiritual RULERS.

Jesus Christ the Lord is spoken of in Scripture as a star: Balaam thus describes him, Numbers xxiv. 7. To St. John, Jesus declared—“*I am the bright and morning star.*” He was so, because of the unsullied purity of his ministry—the profundity of his light and wisdom—the benignancy of his aspect—the glory of his person and ministry:

“*In him was light, and that light was the light of men.*” But the apostles were images of Christ—bright and shining lights—his representatives upon earth: so are their successors. The ruling ministers, or bishops of the churches, are represented by the stars which Jesus holds in his hands, to intimate his mission of them, his care and protection of them, and the honour he has conferred on them—that from him, *whose face shines as the sun in his strength*, they derive their influence and lustre; he holds them forth as the moral lights of the world, in the period of which it is said—“*The night is far spent, the day is at hand,*” Rom. xiii. 12; that they may shed their influences upon the Church, who, because of this privilege, are distinguished from all others by the appellation—“*Children of the light.*”

To the very same purpose tends the designation “angels.” The word *Ἀγγέλως* signifies a messenger or legate. It is a title of office when applied to intellectual beings whom God employs as his messengers in providence; and it also intimates, they are persons of exalted power. It is also applied to the ruling elements of nature, by which Jehovah acts; “whence,” says Parkhurst, “they are called his *personators, instruments of action, or visibility*. Compare Heb. i. 6 with Psalm xcvi. 7; Heb. i. 7 with Psalm civ. 4, and other places.”

The title is applied to Jesus Christ the Lord; he is called, “*The angel of the covenant*”—“*The angel of his presence*”—“*The angel Jehovah.*”

Jacob calls him, "*The angel who redeemed me from all evil.*" But these terms or titles relate to him as the ruler of his Church—"I will send," said God to Moses, "*my angel before thee.*" This angel was to be their protector, guide, and ruler, "*the leader and commander of the people.*" Christ, as the head of his Church, is thus emphatically entitled an angel. Zech. i. 12; Rev. xi. 1.

The term is also applied to those ministers who are ambassadors or legates of Christ; and whenever it is applied by God to any human beings, it signifies they are his representatives. As, then, the term, in its applications to spiritual agents, intimates rulers—as, in its application to the elements, it is given to the ruling elements—as, in its application to Christ the Saviour, it imports his office as ruler or head of the Church; so analogy will require that, in its application to men, it should signify those who are Christ's *personators, representatives*, his images as rulers and governors of his Church, that is to say, bishops.

These, Sir, are some of the reasons which have been by me most deliberately weighed and maturely reflected upon, and these afford me demonstration that Episcopacy is the only legitimate mode of Church government; that, equally with the institutions of the Levitical economy, it is DIVINE IN ITS ORIGIN.

LETTER VII.

A PRESCRIPT FORM OF PRAYER PREFERABLE IN PUBLICK WORSHIP.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

PRAYER is an essential part of divine worship—one of the principal exercises of religion. It is the highest act of homage which a creature can offer to his Creator. It is the noblest engagement in which an intelligent being can be employed. It is the happiest privilege to which our nature can be raised, viz. to hold converse with the august and supreme Ruler of the universe. It is a duty of religion which includes almost every other, since it requires the exercise of humility, of faith, hope, and charity. It is an acknowledgment of all the perfections of Deity; a recognition of our guiltiness, dependency, and need, and at the same time an expression of our confidence in him who is "*our Father in heaven.*" In fine, prayer is an assemblage of all the various acts of adoration, an epitome of all the different services of religion.

On this account it is that Scripture lays so much stress on this one duty, so frequently enjoins it,

and by so many motives presses upon us its obligation. By prayer the Christian is characterized : “ *Whoso invoceth the name of the Lord shall be saved.*” Its performance is entitled a sacrifice : “ *Let my prayer come before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice—so will we render unto thee the calves of our lips.*” From his condescension in listening to our requests, Jehovah is distinguished from the idols of heathenism by this emphatic title : “ *Thou that hearest prayer ;*” whilst, in fine, he has designated his sanctuary by a name derived from these public acts of devotion, as—“ *The house of prayer.*” —“ *My house shall be called the house of prayer.*”

This religious exercise constituted the most important part of the worship of the primitive Church, of which we read—“ *they all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication ;* and ever since, in Christian assemblies, it has been maintained, and is allowed to be, not only an integral part of divine worship, but beyond all others the most important.

Now that which is so important ought to be done well ; hence Scripture admonishes us “ *not to offer unto God the sacrifice of fools.*”—“ *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God ; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.*”

That this duty may be rightly discharged, liturgical services have been compiled for the use of different churches by their respective bishops. But these formularies of prayers have been, by

some, greatly objected to; indeed there is no one thing towards which multitudes in our day, whether from education or prejudice, or some other motives, manifest a stronger disgust, than against the use of a liturgy or form of prayer. It becomes, then, a serious matter of inquiry amongst sober Christians, whether such prejudices are well founded—whether such a mode of divine worship is suitable or improper.

Many, indeed, of the most eminent non-conformists, both in former and latter times, have not altogether objected to a liturgical service. Thus the excellent Philip Henry, as is recorded in his life written by his son, conceived it his duty not to reject the formulary of the Anglican Church; but when he could, he attended the service of the Episcopal Church of his country, and not only persuaded others to attend also, but prevailed on some Presbyterian ministers, by his arguments, to give the liturgy thereof their sanction. Dr. Watts, also an eminent Congregational divine, in a work of his, entitled “A Guide to Prayer,” says of a form, “Christ himself seems to have indulged it to his disciples in their infant state of Christianity. Luke xi. 18. I grant also, that sometimes the most improved saints may find their own wants and desires, and the frames of their own hearts, so happily expressed in the words of other men, that they cannot find better, and may, therefore, in a very pious manner, use the same, especially when they labour under a present deadness of spirit and great indisposition for

the duty. It is also evident that many assistances may be borrowed, by younger and elder Christians, from forms of prayer well composed, without the use of the whole form as a prayer; and if I may have leave to speak the language of a judicious author, who wrote some years ago, I would say with him, ‘that forms may be useful, and in some cases necessary.’”—*Watts’ Guide*, § iii. c. 1.

In accordance with these sentiments, he composed a variety of forms for the use of other persons. Dr. Doddridge did the same in his “*Rise and Progress, &c.*” In like manner, Matthew Henry, the expositor, not only wrote a work, entitled “*A Method for Prayer*,” consisting of arrangements of Scripture expressions under a variety of heads; but he also composed and published numerous forms for individuals and families; for different circumstances, relations, and periods of human life. The same has been done by many others, both in ancient and modern times, and among various parties of Christians.

The question, then, is not whether the use of a form of prayer be lawful, for this is conceded, but whether it be most expedient and suitable.

That it is the most proper mode of publick worship, will appear from an examination into its utility, necessity, antiquity, and sanctions.

Many and great are the advantages peculiar to a publick formulary of devotion. It admits of that due previous MEDITATION and PREPARATION by which the mind may be fitted for the solemn

engagements of prayer ; so that, beforehand, we may have those affections awakened, which are to be expressed either in adoration, confession, petition, thanksgiving, or the other acts of devotion ; an advantage which cannot belong to an extempore prayer, inasmuch as we must previously be ignorant what the prayer will be, whether it will suit our case or not—whether it will meet our religious views or not ; and such preparation is of great moment, if we would acquit ourselves suitably. Wise and skilful musicians will always tune their instruments before the concert begins.

Forms, also, are better adapted to the spirit of LIGHT and INTELLIGENCE, by which our devotions should ever be characterized ; for prayer is the discourse of an intelligent creature with his God ; not the mummary of ignorance, but high converse with the glorious Supreme. And as words are necessary to it, to fix the attention, to excite the zeal, and to interest the imagination and senses in these spiritual sacrifices, so ought the matter and words of the prayer to be thoroughly understood ; an advantage which frequently is wanted in extemporaneous prayer, as often not only is the meaning of the person who offers such prayer not perfectly comprehended till his sentence be finished, but sometimes there are things uttered, to which, after due consideration, we could not repeat the cordial Amen. The service which God requires, is “ *a reasonable service* ”—we must pray with “ the UNDERSTANDING ” as well as with the heart.

FAITH and CONFIDENCE are no less necessary to enter into the temper, which is a condition absolutely necessary for the offering up of acceptable prayer—" *Let him ask in faith, nothing doubting,*" a disposition which differs most essentially from rashness and presumption. Now this temper cannot always be exercised with the extemporaneous prayers of others; as, until the prayer be uttered, no one can exercise faith in regard to what shall be said; and often is it the case, that in such prayers an attentive listener finds much to reject, much from which he is most conscientiously compelled to withhold his assent; and hence, as every man will, in offering his extemporaneous prayers, speak according to the present state and feelings of his own mind, he may not only express himself in an ambiguous manner, or "*speaking unadvisedly with his lips,*" but he always will in his prayers give utterance to his own sentiments in doctrine, which may not unfrequently disagree from those of many of his hearers; so that the faith requisite for the prayer "*to come up with acceptance before God,*" is not in exercise; but such an objection cannot possibly be brought against a form which he foreknows.

Equally important is it, that prayer should proceed from a spirit of INTEGRITY AND UPRIGHTNESS. "*Jehovah searcheth the hearts*"—he "*desireth truth in the inward parts;*" when these are wanting, he has declared, "*When you stretch forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear.*" There

is, then, as every Christian will avow, who knows any thing of himself, reason to fear greatly upon this point: for as "*the heart is deceitful above all things;*" as it imposes not only upon others, but also upon the man himself; so it leads oftentimes to mistake the mere workings of animal passion for devout aspirations of soul. The mere novelty or peculiarity of expression frequently so delights the fancy, and awakens the passions, as to afford pleasurable sensations, which, if they were duly scrutinized and brought to the unerring test, would prove to be neither more nor less than mere *theatrical emotion*; whilst, when this is wanting, the extemporaneous prayer is generally accounted so dull, that it is painfully irksome; its wearisome length is complained of. And every man must admit, that he has seen sometimes a whole congregation sitting down in a state of fatigue, or waiting with anxious impatience, in such prayers, for their close—welcoming it, when at last it has arrived, with a smile of delight—and after the termination of the service, lamenting to each other the extreme tediousness and disgust they had previously felt. Thus, *sincerity and uprightness* were absent; a disadvantage by no means so likely to be attendant upon a well composed and previously known liturgy.

Nor is a SERIOUS AND SOLEMN temper of less moment. When we reflect on the greatness and awful majesty of the Being with whom we converse, together with the unspeakable importance of the engagement itself, it will be seen, that to

trifle in such an exercise, is not only to be guilty of the grossest folly ourselves, but also to offer the most daring insult to the dread Supreme. But can there be seriousness and solemnity, when, as is often the case, the people are distressed with the crude, undigested notions and expressions of him who, as the offerer of prayer, presents himself, as their mouth, to the Majesty of heaven, and when they feel either pity or contempt for his weakness? Can there be seriousness when the prayer is made the means, (and this is not uncommon,) by him who offers it, of displaying his talents, of uttering fine things, of showing his attainments in verbiage, of awakening the admiration of his auditors, and, in fine, of converting the sacred desk into an arena of display and compensation, of amusing and gratifying the auditory upon the one part, and receiving, in exchange, their admiration and applause on the other? Is there no danger lest he deceive, whilst amusing the silly and thoughtless, by such meretricious glare, to their utter undoing, and lest he himself, in snuffing up the gale of their applause, find, like Herod, that, in inhaling it, he may be drawing in the pestilence of eternal wrath? Can any attitude be conceived of, either in minister or people, more unchristian?

“ If angels tremble, 'tis at such a sight.”

In a word, can there be seriousness when the whole congregation is thrown into a titter, or their

countenances overspread with a broad grin, at hearing the ridiculous thoughts and ludicrous expressions, which some well-meaning but silly persons sometimes utter? and no man surely will have the hardihood to assert that such things are not sometimes witnessed. But a form of well composed prayer excludes all such occasions of levity, and is every way calculated to produce deep seriousness and solemnity of mind.

Evidently, then, it is useful; it has peculiar advantages. Is it then intended to exclude and prohibit altogether extemporaneous prayer? By no means; there are circumstances in which it is highly proper. Upon this point Dr. Watts, (here introduced, because an authority to whom multitudes of dissenters bow,) in his "Guide to Prayer," says: "Some persons imagine that, if they use no form, they must always pray extempore, and without premeditation; and are ready to think that all free or conceived prayer is extemporary. But these things ought to be distinguished. CONCEIVED prayer is not when we have the words of our prayer formed beforehand to direct our thoughts, but we conceive the matter or substance of our addresses to God first in our minds, and then put those conceptions into such expressions as we think most proper. EXTEMPORARY prayer is when we, without any reflection or meditation beforehand, address ourselves to God, and speak the thoughts of our hearts as fast as we conceive them. Now this is most properly done in that which is called EJACULATORY prayer,

when we lift up our thoughts to God in short breathings of request or thanksgiving, in the midst of any common affairs of life."

The same eminent divine, also, in the above mentioned work, not only advises premeditation, but pre-composition of prayers, to private Christians, and especially to ministers. He tells them, "they should so prepare as if they expected no assistance in this work." But to quote his advice farther upon this point, would carry these letters to far too considerable a length.

Still it may be asked, "Does not the use of a form straiten the Holy Spirit in his assistance in prayer? To this it may be answered, What is the office of this "*Spirit of grace and supplication*?" Surely none will contend that he inspires the prayers themselves; this would be to make him a "*lying spirit*," because it would be to attribute to him thousands of prayers and ideas which are uttered, not only in contradiction to each other, but in direct variance with revealed truth. Let Dr. Watts, who has so fully endeavoured to set forth the work of the Holy Spirit in prayer, and who, consequently, would not under-rate his gracious agency, be listened to upon this subject. He says: "Those persons expect too much from the Spirit in our day, who wait for all inclinations to pray from immediate dictates of the Spirit of God."---"Who expect such aids of the Holy Spirit, as to make their prayers become the proper work of inspiration."---"Who hope for such influences of the Spirit, as to make their

own study and labours needless." Amongst many cautions which he gives, are the following:—"Do not believe all manner of impulses, or urgent impressions of the mind, to proceed from the Spirit."—"Do not expect the influences of the spirit of prayer should be so vehement as certainly to distinguish them from the motives of your own spirit."—"Do not make the gift of prayer the measure of your judgment of the spirit of prayer."—"Do not expect the same measure of assistance at all times from the spirit of prayer." Thus far Dr. Watts.

Whilst then it is admitted that the Holy Spirit does most graciously assist all true believers in this important duty, yet it is insisted that his assistance principally relates to the excitement of those hallowed affections which they need in it, and as the *Spirit of illumination*, by powerfully suggesting to us our necessities; and surely none will contend that he now inspires those prayers which may be extemporaneously uttered, else why does Dr. Watts exhort so much to study and pre-compose prayers? why press it as a duty upon Christians "to strive and labour after the gift of prayer?" Greatly important as in some instances may be extemporaneous prayer, a liturgy will still be found to possess, in public worship, more decided advantages.

A second argument for the employment of a liturgy, may be derived from necessity.

The MEANNESS OF TALENT possessed by some ministers, render it needful that such helps should

be afforded them for the edification of the Church. It is an old proverb, "*Omne genus habet suum vulgum*," (Every profession has its little men.) As then there is a great disparity in the endowments of mankind, as in every thing few only can excel; so, to guard against what is so common in most congregations, the bringing into contempt this most sacred exercise, a prescribed liturgy is rendered necessary.

The EVER-VARYING FRAMES and feelings of men also require it. Since the best, the most learned and talented, sometimes find themselves in an unfit state of mind for such an exercise as extemporaneous prayer; for, besides slight bodily ailments and contingencies of human life, there are many circumstances, such as the weight and temperature of the atmosphere, some unaccountable depression of spirits, extreme nervous excitement, together with other causes, which operate to unhinge the mind, as all must acknowledge; indeed, those who are reputed to excel most in the gift of prayer, often are the first to admit it; therefore, in such cases, a liturgy must be highly necessary.

The CORRUPTIONS AND DEPRAVITY of the human heart no less enforce it. For as the excitement produced by a large assembly sometimes causes the minister to enlarge with great fluency, and produces much fervour of temper; so does this frequently minister no small occasion to temptation ---to spiritual pride and display. The pleasure felt by the ingenuity excited in such engagements,

is very frequently mistaken for high communion with heaven, when, in fact, it is no other than a carnal pleasure, such as is experienced by the poet or the composer, whose "eye is in a fine phrensy rolling." This has been lamented as a source of trouble in their self-examination, by men the most godly and talented; they have confessed that it excited doubts in their minds relative to their true standing before God, since they seldom felt equal excitement and enlargement in the private exercises of devotion.

THE DECENCIES AND ORDER OF PUBLIC WORSHIP require it. It is acknowledged on all sides, that there are frequently many breaches in decorum, arising from the crudities, to say the least of them, sometimes uttered in extemporaneous prayer, the ridiculous expressions sometimes vented, and, with some, the impertinent modes of address to the Deity, and also attempts at finery of language and display. There are serious persons, not only laymen, to whom an appeal could be made, (who cannot endure a liturgy,) who have *often confessed* that some *eminently popular preachers* in the present day, excite so much their utter loathing and disgust with their attempts at saying fine things, and uttering far-fetched words in their prayers, that, instead of feeling any thing akin to devotion in listening to such gaudy and meretricious performances, they only sin in going to listen to them at all.

In fine, the UNITY OF THE FAITH requires it. There is no way in which a man can more easily

instruct his auditors in his peculiar tenets, than in extemporaneous prayer. Few persons in public possess, or, to say the least, exercise any other talent than what has been termed "*preaching prayer*;" and when heterodox men wish insidiously to instill *their* sentiments upon religion, it will be found that in such a way they most effectually succeed. The fearful and pestilential heresies, now so widely prevalent, afford ample proof upon this subject. A liturgy prevents such a mode of teaching; it secures the true knowledge of orthodox doctrines; and the man in the pulpit will be afraid to give the lie to the man in the desk.

Hence, most of the Reformed Presbyterian Churches have had liturgies compiled for them; although, for the most part, they have sunk into desuetude. History informs us of a variety of different liturgies used in various churches from the earliest days of Christianity. Even the French and Dutch Churches had theirs. "Calvin used a form of prayer himself, and composed one for the Sunday service, which was afterwards established at Geneva."—*Beza Prefat. ad Com. Calv. in Job.*

In his letter to the Lord Protector, in the reign of Edward the Sixth he thus writes:—"For so much as concerns the forms of prayers and ecclesiastical rites, I highly approve that it be determined, so as it may not be lawful for the ministry in their administrations to vary from it."—*Calvin, Epist. 87.*

Antiquity yields as another argument for a publick form of prayer.

There are few religious prejudices which are stronger, or which take a firmer hold on the mind, than those which are derived from antiquity; but all antiquity lends its sanction to a liturgical service.

Not to say any thing of the Heathen world, in whose temples every scholar knows that they had prescribed forms of worship and prayers to their deities—not to mention these, the Jews, in their temples and synagogues, used prayers long previous to the advent of our Saviour, and they continue so to do even to this day. It is admitted, that many corruptions have crept into their liturgy; but this does not invalidate the fact; whilst it is remarkable, that the form of prayer which our Lord taught to his disciples, and which is generally entitled “The Lord’s Prayer,” was even as to its very words, taken from different parts of the Jewish liturgies.

It is more than probable, that, even in the apostolick age, such forms obtained, as we no where meet any account of their first introduction into the Christian Church; and if such an innovation had taken place, it is not at all likely it would have occurred without opposition, and consequently notice would have been taken some where of it. There are still extant three liturgies, which, though corrupt, are ascribed to St. Peter, St. Mark, and St. James. That of the latter was of great authority in the days of Cyril, who wrote a

commentary on it in the year 350. Augustine, Tertullian, Clemens, and others, speak in their writings of these liturgies. Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, l. 2. c. 17, tells us, that in their forms of prayer "the Christians sung verses responsive to one another." Nicephorus, lib. xiii. c. 28. derives the responses in the forms of prayers from Ignatius, so that, for the first three centuries of the Christian era, there is sufficient evidence they were in use, and to attempt to prove that the practice obtained subsequently, is needless, as no one conversant with history would attempt to dispute it.

But what adds still further weight and importance to the usage, is the high sanction which has been given to it by the apostles themselves, who were in the habit of frequenting the synagogues and proseuchæ,* as we repeatedly read in the Acts, joining with the Jews in the solemnities of their worship, and in which their liturgy was universally used.

A sanction still higher than that of the apostles was added to it in the person of their Lord and Master, who not only frequented the synagogues during his earthly ministry, but who also compiled, from their very offices of devotion, that form of prayer which he taught to his disciples.

In fine, the Holy Ghost has set the seal of his sanction upon it, not only by blessing it to the edification of the Church, and preserving thereby

* Rendered by our translators, "*Places where prayer was wont to be made.*"

the purity of its doctrine, but also by employing it for the awakening and conversion of many who have become truly devoted unto God.

Such arguments, then, are sufficient to evince that a liturgy is of great importance in conducting the publick worship of God. At the same time it deserves notice, that the greatest opposers of a liturgy use constantly a printed form or liturgy in verse, when singing; and it certainly would be a difficult thing to show why any form should be better for publick worship when arranged in metre, than when arranged in prose.

Nor, in fine, should it be unnoticed, that a very *considerable number* of churches in England, which are, in their discipline and name, Congregational, have been so deeply convinced of the importance of a liturgy, that they constantly use that of the Anglican Church in the publick offices of their devotion.

It is admitted that the constant use of a liturgy may tend, in some degree, (as is objected to it,) to produce something like formality in devotion. This is a disadvantage necessarily attendant upon a human composition, which cannot possibly combine in it every excellency and perfection. But then the choice is between the greater evils of extemporaneous prayer, and the minor inconvenience which may result from the constant recurrence of the same words; an inconvenience from which extemporaneous prayer is not altogether exempt, so that the preponderancy of disadvantage must be on the side of the latter.

So deeply was the writer of these letters convinced of this truth, that for some years before he quitted his native land, (although he used, in addition, an extemporaneous prayer,) he regularly used, in the church over which he presided, the liturgical service of the Church of England.

LETTER VIII.

SURPASSING EXCELLENCE OF THE AMERICAN EPISCOPAL LITURGY.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

THE point being once established, that a liturgical service is of importance to the Church of Christ, it becomes a subject of interesting inquiry, which is that portion of the Church whose liturgy is the most appropriate, and distinguished by characters of the greatest excellency. An impartial examination will not fail, in the view of the writer hereof, to result in attributing this meed of approbation to the American Episcopal Church. Undoubtedly, in this respect, she has attained the pre-eminence even over her mother, the Anglican Church, inasmuch as the formulary of the daughter has been depurated from those little imperfections, (as some have considered them,) which have adhered to that of the parent. Be this as it may, whatever is requisite to excite toward a liturgy our respect, and to claim for it our decided attachment and steady adherence, is in her formulary and Common Prayer to be found.

Are UNITY AND SOCIABILITY necessary characteristics of publick worship? In her services they are especially to be found. A temple carries with it the idea of a happy, harmonious, united society, meeting together in one point of attraction, influenced by a community of interest, feeling, and hope; cemented together by the firmest bonds; improving, exalting, and refining the sweetest charities of the human bosom. Other engagements may draw mankind together; commerce, pleasure, or various other motives; but no engagement will place them on so equal and important a footing, unite them in relations so engaging, animate them with views so exalted and dignified, and assimilate or bind them together so closely, as the publick services of religion.

The closet is the place for secret converse with God, where the believer may be prepared for publick and social engagements. The church, however, is not the place for solitary, but social engagement; there the joys of each are redoubled by participation; there the rays of devotion are reflected from face to face, like those which emanated from the countenance of Moses when he held communion with God; there the zeal of each one adds fervour to that of his brethren; there the solitary "My Father and my God," is exchanged for the social "Our Father and our God," whilst the united prayers and praises, blending together, ascend like one stream of incense before the eternal throne.

Hence, in this beautiful liturgy all the worshippers take their part; every one is engaged; instead of leaving it to their minister, as their proxy, to offer up for them alone the sacrifice; the meanest, as well as the highest of the assembly, participates therein; the babe who can but lisp the praises of the Most High, as well as the hoary pilgrim whose head has been silvered o'er by time, all blend their voices in the solemn exercise, and uttering their different parts and alternate responses, feel an equal interest in the same important engagements; presenting an image of that blissful state, when the multitude "*out of every nation, kindred, and tongue,*" offer their united homage—where, loud as the sound of many waters and the voice of mighty thunders, they tender one song of praise unto the slaughtered Lamb.

Are SIMPLICITY AND PLAINNESS necessary characteristicks of publick worship? Where can we find any thing more artless? Rhetoricians will tell us, that the very first perfection of language is its clearness; and surely if this excellency ought any where to be found, it should be in such a service. Its expression should be adapted to the meanest capacity; yet its language should be so conceived as to be rich and magnificent, and suited to the subject; so easy, that those who are least versed in the school of Christ may, without difficulty, comprehend it; and yet so dignified, that it may not debase the most glorious and exalted conceptions. And is not this the case in this

liturgy? In it we meet no words adorned with studied elequence—no magnificent metaphors dazzling the fancy—the ear is not delighted by the highly wrought harmony of well cadenced periods—the mind is not diverted by the brilliancy of far-fetched thoughts—all is noble, without affectation—all is simple, without being mean: on one part, the addresses to the Most High are worthy the power and the love of the God whom we adore; and on the other part, all the expressions are suited to the condition of the fallen and repentant creature, who is too deeply penetrated with a sense of his condition to be in too much concern about the words he employs—it is the language of the heart, which speaks by the mouth—it is the earnestness of the simple soul, which gives utterance to its desires—it is not the eloquence of sentences, but of feeling—it is “the cry of faith to the ear of mercy.”

Are WISDOM AND COMPREHENSIVENESS necessary characteristics of a publick service? Here, then, shall we find them; since there is nothing which can possibly constitute our converse with God, but is here expressed. What sins can we be chargeable with, but in it are confessed? What lust torment us, but in it is deplored? What evil can we dread, but in it is deprecated? What blessing can we desire, but in it is acknowledged? What hope can we cherish, but in it is uttered? In a word, there is no situation in which we can be placed, no character or relation we can sustain, no difficulty we may encounter, no affliction we

may experience, no burden under which we may groan, but we find language therein in which our complaint is vented before God. There is no desire we can cherish, whether for time or eternity—for pardon, for peace, for purity, but is thereby presented before God. There is no pleasurable delight we can experience, whether of temporal prosperity or spiritual joy, but we have language put into our lips suited to our case. It seems as if the wisdom of the best and holiest of men had been concentrated to construct this beauteous liturgy; as if, like Solomon of old, who brought from Paros its marble, from Lebanon its cedars, from Ophir its gold, from Egypt its linen, from India its jewels, from Arabia its perfume, from Tyre its purple and its workmen, and indeed from all the world its choicest materials, to construct and embellish a magnificent temple: it seems as if, like him, the compilers of this liturgy had searched every clime and country, had examined every case and condition of mankind, and then that from all, and for all, they had constructed this apt, symmetrical, and comprehensive service, for the temple of Messiah.

Are BREVITY AND CONCISENESS necessary characteristics of a publick ritual? These are also here. In all forms of language, conciseness is desirable, but especially in the addresses we present to Almighty God. If we would avoid the defects which are inevitable to mortality, our prayers should be short. Little do they know of the nature of the human mind, who suppose that

it is capable of maintaining long those abstractions which call it away from earth, and which carry it toward heaven. Our senses and inclinations too heavily gravitate to this world, to permit a long and vigorous flight toward eternal objects. We constantly complain of distractions—we are interrupted perpetually, like Abraham, by those flights of birds which hover around and pollute our sacrifices—we are too fastly chained to the cumbrous loads of mortality and sense, to obtain many minutes for a continuous effort in prayer—we groan under the languors beneath which we struggle, and we long for deliverance. But for these imperfections, a remedy is provided in the brevity of these addresses to the throne of grace. Our weakness, our languors, our distractions, are provided for by the shortness of the exercises and the recurrence of the topics; what is wanting in length, is made up for in frequency. The conciseness of the prayers, facilitate our devotions; they become, each one, a sort of resting-place, so that we ascend from step to step of this sacred ladder which unites earth with heaven.

Are VARIETY AND DIVERSITY necessary characteristics for a liturgical service? Here may we find them. In nature we are delighted with the diversity which every where obtains, and this incessant variation adds to its beauty, and enhances the pleasure with which we gaze upon every scene. One uniform monotonous prospect would speedily tire and fatigue us. Hence, the Creator, to relieve and to gratify us, has caused hills and vallies

to intersect each other; he has covered the earth with trees, and shrubs, and plants, and flowers, endlessly differing in variety and beauty; he has chequered the whole with lights and shadows; he has instituted the succession of day and night, and caused the seasons perpetually to alternate: thus he relieves our tedium, and exhilarates our hearts. In like manner, the compilers of this excellent liturgy seem deeply to have been acquainted with our nature, and to have studied, for imitation, the works of Deity. They have so constructed it, that, whilst its addresses to Almighty God are so brief that they do not tire, and so comprehensive that they take in all our circumstances; they are so diversified, that they relieve us, and lead gradually on from one part of devotion to another—from the expression of one desire to another—from the acknowledgment of one mercy to another—from the contemplation and adoration of one attribute to another; in fine, from the deepest abasement of humility to the highest exultation of hope. Nor are these transitions sudden, broken, or precipitate; but gentle and easy, like the colours of the rainbow, dye melting into dye—like the perspective of a landscape, shade melting into shade. It has thrown all around it all the beauty and charms of exquisite variety.

Are SPIRITUALITY AND SANCTITY necessary to characterize a publick formulary? In this the liturgy pre-eminently abounds. So replete is it with Scripture, that the beautiful psalmody of the

ancient temple is perpetually vibrating in its melodies—that the whole record of divine revelation, in the very words of their inspired writers, are in the course of the year brought into the audience of the people—that the great object of all its addresses to Deity refer to the immortal spirit, or to temporal affairs only in subserviency to it. If, to render our emotions spiritual, they should be regulated by *a sense of our condition*, the liturgy leads us to the most deep and pungent acknowledgments of our guilt and misery, in the language of its confessional and prayers. If, to render our devotions spiritual, they should be regulated by *the grandeur of our interests*, where shall we find prayers more wise and suitable?—no petition is breathed for those riches of earth which so dazzle the eyes, and bewilder the mind, and corrupt the heart; no petition is breathed for those sensual enjoyments which captivate the senses and degrade the soul; no petition is breathed for the pomps, and glories, and dignities of this world, of which “*the pageant passeth away*”—they refer only to “*the things which are unseen and eternal*”—to pardon, and purity, and meetness for the inheritance above. If, to render our prayers spiritual, they should be regulated by the *genius of the Gospel*, which requires detachment from the world, moderation in our desires, and exalted sanctity of mind, to what else tends the liturgy in its exhortations, its rites, its hymns, its praises, and its prayers, but “*to make clean our hearts within us?*” If, to render our devotions spiritual, they should

be regulated by *the divine promises*—if the will of God should be the rule of our requests and desires—does not the liturgy ground all its petitions and services upon this very foundation? Does it not remind God of his promises, when it tells him, he “*hath declared that he desireth not the death of the sinner*”—that he hath “*promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he will hear their requests?*” Does it not uniformly urge, as the ground of hope and confidence, the merits and mediation of the Redeemer? If, in fine, to render our devotions spiritual, they should be regulated by *the character of God*, does not the liturgy, in its use, bring before us every perfection and attribute by which he is adorned? Does it not express every emotion of spirit to which that attribute lays claim—of fear, of reverence, of esteem, of humility, of confidence, of gratitude, fidelity, and love? It magnifies him as the Being in whom unite every excellency; who ought alone to possess all the allegiance of our hearts, and who, as the rightful Sovereign of all creatures, sits enthroned in inconceivable glory upon the riches of the universe.

Are FERVOUR AND PATHOS necessary characteristicks of a publick formulary? No composition can surpass the liturgy in this respect; there is in every prayer something that is exquisitely touching. Some of them are peculiarly earnest and impassioned, whilst the litany breathes a devotion so intense, that it is impossible for language to express more strongly the agony of a

soul who wrestles in prayer. In its confessions it expresses a spirit of *penitential sorrow*, giving utterance to the deep humility and poignant anguish of a broken heart. In its petitions it expresses a spirit of *holy desire* panting for a sense of pardoned guilt, a spirit of *decided preference* for the blessings of religion, a spirit of *humble submission* to the appointments of Providence. In its sacred hymns it expresses a spirit of *zeal* for the divine glory, anxious that all creatures may be united in celebrating his praise. In its intercessions it expresses a spirit of *charity*, supplicating blessings not only upon the Church at large, but also upon all mankind. A sacred fervour pervades the whole, not the wild fire of fanaticism, but of sober, serious piety; it resembles not a fire of straw blazing with fury, and as transient too, but the sacred flame kindled from on high on the altar of the tabernacle, pure, steady, and constant, ascending acceptably unto God.

Are ORDER AND DISTRIBUTION necessary characteristicks of a publick formulary? Impossible is it that a liturgy could be better arranged or more naturally formed; commencing with an acknowledgment of our misery and guilt before the throne of the divine Majesty—proceeding with a comfortable ministerial publication of the divine mercy to the penitent—this again followed with prayer and animated praise—these engagements succeeded by lessons from both the Old and New Testaments, each of which, in turn, is followed by hymns of thanksgiving—then the publick and

solemn avowal of our belief—then a succession of brief and comprehensive prayers, with the litany enkindling at every step still higher feelings, till, at length, the overflowing heart vents itself in charitable intercessions and gratulatory acknowledgments to “*the Giver of all good.*” Blind indeed, and insensible to whatever is orderly and beautiful, must he be, who does not admire this arrangement and disposition. It is the very thing which rhetoricians declare to be at once so charming and yet so difficult to accomplish—a regular and happy climax. It is an imitation of the volume of divine revelation itself, in which the mind is led up, by gradations, from contemplating the misery of a fallen world, to enter with the seer of the Apocalypse into the visions of God.

Are CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES necessary characteristicks of a publick formulary? This they must be, since a worship which is solely spiritual, and which does not partake of corporeal forms and rites, would be unsuited to our present state. To an invisible world it may be adapted, but not to merely human beings. We are compound creatures. We are constructed of earthly, as well as heavenly materials; of body, as well as of spirit. Our only knowledge of spiritual objects is obtained by means of those which are corporeal; hence, to be suited to our nature, a sanctuary service must have signs, and symbols, and ordinances. This is evident, also, from the very institutions and sacraments of our Lord; besides

by the actions of our body, the spirit expresses its sentiments and feelings, as well as by words. Philosophers have therefore called actions, natural language; but words they have designated, artificial language. Our inward emotions will ever discover themselves by our exterior gesture and conduct. Justly, therefore, has the Church enlisted into her liturgical service, the body, as well as the spirit, and required its posture to be altered according to the nature of the service in which we engage: enjoining especially, that in the more humble and adoring services with genuflections we should appear in the divine presence. This posture Scripture represents as the most befitting for adoration and invocation. By Isaiah Jehovah speaks, and says, "*I have sworn by myself, and the word is gone out of my mouth, that to me every knee shall bow.*" In like manner St. Paul tells us of the Saviour, "*that at his name every knee should bow;*" whilst David says, "*O come, let us worship and kneel, let us bow before the Lord our Maker.*" St. Paul tells the Ephesians that this was his practice—"For this cause I bow my knee to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" whilst the example of the Master himself, in Gethsemane, should be a warrant for every Christian.

Are—but whither am I going? Already are these letters swoln to too great an extent, and time would fail me to set forth the sublimity and grandeur of some of its compositions, the beauty of its apostrophes, the energy of its pleadings,

with other excellencies, which stud this galaxy of light, this stream of mild and lovely radiancy which leads to upper and to better worlds. Indeed it is not easy adequately to set forth the excellencies of this composition, in which the Church may exult and say, in grateful praise to God, "*Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of thy truth.*"

These, Sir, are some of the many reasons of my conformity to the Church of which you are a Prelate; a Church which appears to me to be destined to a work of high eminence and distinction in advancing the glorious cause of the Redeemer; to maintain, amidst desolating heresies and fanaticism, the purity of the faith; and to reclaim wanderers to the fold of "*the great Shepherd of the sheep.*"

Amidst the convulsions of the moral world, the contending elements of human passions, and the gigantick march of infidelity and heresy, I think I see her rise, not like that frightful and heterogeneous image which, in his dreams, presented itself before the emphrensied imagination of Nebuchadnezzar, whose head was of gold, whose breast was of silver, whose thighs were of brass, and whose legs were of iron and perishable clay; beneath whose frown nations should wither, but with whose downfall the universe should resound, —no! I think I see her rise like some majestick watch-tower founded upon the Rock of Ages, and holding forth, amidst the night of moral darkness, "*the light of life*" to the mariner, buffeted and

tempest—tossed on the sea of time—like that lofty mountain upon whose summit reposed the ark, beneath whose base the mightiest monarchies have mouldered into ruins, and around whose summit eternity might play; or, rather like that blessed tree beheld by the seer of the Apocalypse, in the visions of the Almighty, whose root was watered by “*the river of water of life,*” “*yielding its fruit every month, and shedding its leaves for the healing of the nations.*” She may, indeed, be assailed by the sneers of the infidel, the malignity of the bigot, and the persecutions of the ungodly; but “*against her the gates of hell shall not prevail;*” to her justly may be applied the language, otherwise unsuitably employed, of a Heathen poet, that she stands

“ ——— Monumentum ære perennius,
Regalique situ Pyramidum altius:
Quod non imber edax, non Aquilo impotens
Possit diruere, aut innumerabilis
Annorum series, et fuga temporum.”

HORACE.

CONCLUDING LETTER.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

IN the preceding letters I have laid before you, with as much brevity as possible, the principal reasons which have enforced upon my mind the conviction that Episcopacy is the divinely appointed mode of government of the Church of Christ. In presenting to you this detail, I have purposely omitted many arguments of less moment, leading to the same conclusion, only lest I should swell this little work to what might perhaps be considered an unreasonable magnitude. Especially, in so doing, have I passed by an argument which might be adduced from the analogy subsisting between all the works of God, and which strikes me as affording, if not demonstration, at least something like presumptive evidence, upon the subject under review.

Some theologians have undertaken to demonstrate the truth of divine revelation from the analogy subsisting between it and the other productions of its divine Author; and although I have never yet seen any argument in favour of Episcopacy derived from the same source, yet it strikes me that such an argument would tend

strongly to its support; and much should I like to see the subject handled by a better pen than mine, as I anticipate such an argument would tend deeply to strengthen my convictions, that parity is utterly unknown in all the works of Deity.

There are certain characteristick features which mark the works of every being, so that, by careful examination of each production, we may ascertain its author. Thus a Grecian statuary would, in looking at a group of figures, select the performance of each individual author; he would say, This is a Phidias, and that is a Praxiteles. A connoisseur, in examining a gallery of paintings, would say, This is a Guido, and that a Raphael or a Titian. A poet will easily discern between a drama of Shakspeare and one of Addison's. History tells us of a painter at Athens, who one day called to see another artist, but as he was not at home, the servant requested him to leave his name; upon which, taking in his hand the painter's pencil, he drew a line upon his canvass, "Tell your master," said he to the servant, "that it was the man who drew this line that called to see him." On his return, the painter needed no further information. "I know," said he, "who it was, for only one man exists who could draw such a line."

Upon this principle men are accustomed to reason in arguing upon the productions of human skill, and the mode of reasoning is allowed to be valid. Upon the same principle has it been contended, that the book which professes to have God

for its author, is the product of his inspiration. It is contended, that, possessing characters of resemblance to the works of nature and the dispensations of Providence, revelation is by analogy evinced to be from God. And surely if Phidias could so construct the shield of Minerva that all who gazed upon it must see that by his art the sculptor had engraved his own likeness thereon, it cannot be strange that Jehovah should so impress his own image upon all his works, as that universally it must be seen.

But no where, in all the works of Deity, do we perceive any thing like parity. Endless variety and interminable gradations every where exist. From the brightest intellectual spirit, who bows before the awful splendour of the eternal throne, down to the little glow-worm that kindles its glimmering taper under the hedge, nay, down to the minutest animalcule of creation, which escapes our unaided vision, there is an unbroken concatenation of links; yet all existing in different gradations, according to the appointment of the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Amongst all the animated creatures of this world, which exist in a state of society, whether irrational or rational, there are various orders and degrees, officers and rulers. Revelation tells us the same of the heavenly world; it represents the angels as existing in different degrees of subordination; it describes them as "*thrones and dominions, principalities and powers.*" Whilst Clemens Alexandrinus,—Aretas, in his Commentary on the Apocalypse,

and St. Irenæus, (as quoted by Du Bosc,) and others of the first and oldest teachers of Christianity, speak much of the celestial hierarchy—of their different orders, offices, names, and degrees of authority and rule, so that nothing like parity is to be found in that upper world.

The system of parity, then, for which some so vehemently contend in the Church, bears no analogy to the other appointments of Deity: and this fact affords something like presumption that it was not by him appointed. But upon this I have only glanced, being fully aware that, had I adduced it as an argument, it would have been selected by the enemies of Episcopacy, not only to the disparagement, but neglect, of the powerful testimonies I have adduced.

I trust that I have not indulged in any thing like unhallowed feeling in the temper which characterizes these letters; my opposition has been to opinions, not to men. For my brethren of the Presbyterian Church I have cherished, and will still cherish, the warmest and most affectionate regard; I shall ever love their persons, though I may be compelled, from conviction, to differ from their sentiments. There are some with whom I have the happiness to be acquainted, whom I esteem for their virtues, and revere for their piety; who cordially welcomed me on my arrival in this country, opened to me their pulpits, and, by many expressions of regard, made me feel that I was not in a land of strangers, but at home. Such men I shall never cease to love, and can only

regret that upon this point (a point to me of no minor importance) we cannot "*see eye to eye.*"

If of the writings of one individual I have spoken in terms which may to some appear too strong, allow me to say I have of him no personal knowledge, and consequently entertain towards him no personal ill-will. I never heard his name till I became acquainted with his writings. But when I saw such unfairness in his quotations, such gross misrepresentations of historical facts, such needless vituperation of his opponents, (who to me seemed writing, if with warmth, yet not without courteousness,) that by this "*ruse de guerre*" he might awaken the sympathies of his Presbyterian readers, of whom he knew not one in a hundred would ever read the opposite party's statements, I confess I felt it my duty to speak plainly upon the subject. If Moses felt indignant at witnessing the misconduct of Aaron in the matter of the golden calf—if a greater than he expressed a similar feeling at the desecration of the temple—if Protestants all join in expressions of indignation at the impositions of the Romish clergy, which have been called "*pious frauds,*" then I cannot think I have acted unchristianly in speaking, in the softest terms which honesty would allow, of one who, if he be a learned man, should never have so misrepresented facts; or if he be not, should not so dogmatically have pretended to be master of the subject.

Fully am I aware that the majority of Presbyterians have never examined impartially both

sides of the question. I speak from experience. Never, till my arrival in this country, had I fully done so myself. I have conversed with many of the laity among Presbyterians in this country, who have read the works of the Presbyterian advocates referred to in these letters, and who have told me how triumphantly they refuted their opponents; yet not one of whom, upon seriously questioning them, but admitted to me they had never read a single work on the opposite side. Perhaps I should not err, if I said also, that very many of the clergy, in this respect, closely resemble them. And this I say, not by way of reproach to them, for well I know they consider (as once the writer did,) that it would be time lost to examine the arguments adduced by the opponents of a system which they fully believe to be divinely instituted; they act from the deep convictions of their consciences. Whilst, then, I also most conscientiously withdraw myself from their communion, still will I enshrine their names in my heart,—I will hail them as my fellow-Christians,—I will rejoice in their success in winning souls from the common enemy, and directing them to Christ, as the alone Saviour, I will take as mine, the motto of an ancient bishop:—

“ IN NECESSARIIS, UNITAS; IN NON NECESSARIIS, LIBERTAS; IN OMNIBUS, CHARITAS.” In things necessary, unity; in things unnecessary, liberty; in all things, charity.

ERRATA.

Page 12, second line from bottom, dele "that."
119, in the note, for "*Placcs.*" read *Places*.



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